

La

FALL 2016/  
WINTER 2017

# LOUISIANE

THE MAGAZINE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE



## ENGULFED

Climate Refugees  
Try to Preserve  
Their Heritage



I had been working at UL Lafayette for about a year when I made a gaffe that led to a *La Louisiane* cover story.

I presumed that what I considered to be a low turnout for a campus election meant that students were apathetic. At the tactful suggestion of my boss at the time, Julie Simon-Dronet, I began to educate myself about the University's student body by studying enrollment data and talking with lots of students.

What I learned surprised me. One third of the students were 25 or older. Ninety percent of the student body held at least one job. The vast majority commuted to campus.

It became clear that voter turnout couldn't necessarily be attributed to apathy. Students were busy juggling classes, coursework, jobs and family responsibilities.

So the Fall 1994 cover story of *La Louisiane* answered this question: Who is the USL student? We wanted readers to learn about our students, too.

A feature in this issue gives readers a look at who the UL Lafayette student is today, but in a different way.

It's composed of images of students who volunteered to have their portraits taken during the Dear World Campus Tour and posted on the internet. Their bodies became canvases for messages they want to convey to, well, everyone.

Although the photos don't reflect the precise demographics of the UL Lafayette student body, they are enlightening. Some messages are thought-provoking. Some are wise. Others are uplifting.

In addition to the students' portraits, this issue includes articles about a few noteworthy students, such as Taiye Ajayi. She's the 1,000th graduate of UL Lafayette's online RN to BSN program. Taiye earned a bachelor's degree in nursing while working full time. When she began to pursue that degree, her children were 6 months old and 2 years old.

There's also an article about two students who are the first to earn a new doctorate in educational leadership, with a concentration in higher education. The twist? How much they have in common.

And, a couple of athletic training majors landed plum internships with the LA Rams. Some lagniappe: they were featured in an HBO reality show.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *La Louisiane*.

– Kathleen Thames





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ON THE COVER: Fisherman Tommy Dardar casts a net on Isle de Jean Charles, which will soon be inundated. Photography by Doug Dugas

## La LOUISIANE

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## Surprising Serpents

Studies show which snakes strike fastest, including the monster Titanoboa BY CHARLIE BIER



Dr. Brad Moon



Dr. David Penning

University researchers are shedding light on snakes and their behavior, from venom-injecting vipers to a prehistoric constrictor called Titanoboa, an almost 50-foot-long giant too thick to squeeze through a modern doorway.

In one case, research conducted by Dr. Brad Moon, an associate professor of biology; Dr. David Penning, a former UL Lafayette doctoral student; and Baxter Sawvel, a graduate student, took the fangs out of the widespread misconception that venomous snakes, such as rattlesnakes and cottonmouths, strike faster than nonvenomous snakes.

The three researchers published an article in “Biology Letters,” a scientific journal based in London. “Debunking the Viper’s Strike: Harmless Snakes Kill a Common Assumption,” challenges a longstanding belief that vipers possess the quickest strikes of all snakes.

The discovery came, in part, by chance. The researchers were conducting a study to determine how the size of snakes affects strike speed. In the process, they came to an astounding realization. While measuring defensive strike capabilities of Texas rat snakes, they noted that the nonvenomous snakes struck with acceleration and velocity that rival western diamond-backed rattlesnakes and western cottonmouths, also known as water moccasins.

The revelation, shown in slow-motion playback of high-speed videos, was so surprising, the researchers couldn’t believe their eyes. So, they conducted multiple tests.

The scientists measured strike speeds of 14 Texas rat snakes, 12 western diamondback rattlesnakes, and six water moccasins locked in specially modified aquariums. Padded gloves attached to the end of long, wooden dowels were waved before the snakes. The rat snakes repeatedly struck as fast as, and in some instances faster, than vipers.

“It was surprising initially, but when we thought about what we were seeing, it made sense, given that different kinds of snakes catch and eat similar kinds of foods. They have to catch the same kinds of rodents, and they all have to do it quickly,” said Moon, a respected researcher and herpetologist who has studied a wide range



of snake behavior and movements.

Research revealed that rattlesnakes struck fastest overall, at 28 Gs, which is force exerted due to acceleration or gravity. Rat snakes, though, were a close second, at 27 Gs. That's almost double the amount of G-force that could cause a fighter jet pilot to lose consciousness.

For added perspective, vipers and rat snakes both hit their targets in about 50 to 90 milliseconds. In comparison, the blink of a human eye lasts about 200 milliseconds.

"Basically, the primary conclusion is that vipers are not necessarily the snipers of the snake world. They strike quickly, but so do other snakes," said Penning, the paper's lead author.

That sort of reasoning resonated with dozens of international media outlets. *National Geographic*, *The New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *Discover*, are just several that covered the findings.

While the discovery is intriguing, Penning said much work remains. With about 3,500 species of snakes in the world, "the question now becomes: How many other snakes can do this? We've tested three in a controlled setting."

Snake research conducted at the University also was included in a Public Broadcasting Service documentary that aired in November, although in a different context.

An episode of the PBS series "Secrets of the Dead," titled "Graveyard of the Giant Beasts," focused on which of two prehistoric reptiles might have been the apex predator in the rainforests of South America after a meteor strike wiped out dinosaurs more than 60 million years ago.

The award-winning series relies on modern forensic methods and research to explore subjects like archaeology, disaster and disease, and historical figures.

An episode featuring Penning showed Titanoboa, an ancient 3-foot-wide snake estimated to have been 43-48 feet long and to have weighed 2,500 pounds. Titanoboa was pitted against the Cerrejon, a mammoth, 30-foot-long prehistoric crocodile with jaws as long as a person. Fossils of the two extinct reptiles were unearthed during coal mining operations in Colombia, South America. Titanoboa was discovered in 2009; it was thought to be the region's top predator, until the Cerrejon crocodile was discovered in 2012.

"Graveyard of the Giant Beasts" tapped experts to examine the behavior of today's largest snakes and crocodiles to try to determine which of the ancient reptiles might have been most dominant.

A film crew visited campus and interviewed Penning, who has



A Tyrannosaurus Rex was about 40 feet long. A Titanoboa would have been five to 10 feet longer.

conducted a wealth of research about the striking and constriction capabilities of snakes, including some of the world's largest—pythons and boa constrictors.

For the TV show, he relied on data he had collected over the past 3½ years. Penning's objective was to try to determine something that had never been measured before: the potential strike speed and constriction power of Titanoboa.

Penning worked in the laboratory, and visited zoos and private breeders, in his quest to gather information on large snakes, including a 15-foot long Burmese python.

What Penning, who earned a doctorate in environmental and evolutionary biology in December 2016 and now teaches at Missouri Southern State University, learned was that Titanoboa could have struck at the crocodile in one- to two-tenths of a second. "Point two seconds is on the order of an eyeblink. So this is a very, very fast maneuver," Penning said.

He also determined that the huge snake would have been able to crush prey with an overall constriction pressure of about 250 pounds per square inch, for a total of 1.3 million pounds of force. "I don't know of an animal that could deliver that kind of pressure today. For comparison's sake, we'd probably be talking industrial grade trash compactors or car crushers."

[Click to view bonus content.](#) 

# Responding to Tragedy

Interdisciplinary study to examine community's capacity to recover

**D**r. Michael Dunaway was driving past the Grand 16 Theater on Johnston Street at about 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 23, 2015.

Now director of UL Lafayette's National Incident Management Systems and Advanced Technologies, he didn't notice anything amiss.

But, inside one of the movie theaters, all hell was breaking loose. John Houser, described by police as a mentally ill drifter, was seated near the back of the theater where the comedy "Trainwreck" was showing. According to police reports, he stood up, pulled a Hi-Point .40-caliber semiautomatic pistol from under his shirt and opened fire.

Houser then left the theater through a side door. After spotting a police cruiser that had just arrived in the parking lot, he reloaded the semiautomatic, reentered the theater, and fired more rounds before fatally shooting himself in the head.

Mayci Breaux, an LSU-Eunice student, and Jillian Johnson, '04, a musician and artist, were killed. Nine people were wounded.

"I probably drove past the theater exactly as that incident was happening," Dunaway said. "The next morning, there were police vehicles and ambulances surrounding the theater, and yellow crime-scene tape all around the parking lot. I had no idea what had taken place until I got to my office, looked up a local news channel's website, and learned of the previous night's incident."

The scene at the Grand 16 had not changed much by Friday evening.

"But what I started to see were 'Lafayette Strong' signs. It seemed like they were in every window front and on every utility pole. Almost every commercial enterprise had some variation of 'Lafayette Strong' or 'Pray for Lafayette,'" Dunaway recalled in a recent interview. "Over the next several days, those signs became symbolic of the community's unity in the face of tragedy."

That public response to the shooting made an impression on Dunaway.

Dr. Taniecea Mallery, director of Equity, Diversity and Community Engagement in the University's Office for Campus Diversity, learned of the shooting from a tweet by a local television station.

Social media quickly became a way for people to check in with each other, which intrigued her. "If social media, like Facebook and Twitter, started to have this activity, could we create something that was specifically



Dr. Michael Dunaway



Dr. Taniecea Mallery

designed for the management of a disaster?" she thought.

After Dunaway became NIMSAT director in November 2015, he began to talk with Mallery and others on campus about Lafayette's response to the shooting. "There were about six or eight people who had common interests that we never knew intersected," Mallery said.

From these encounters, Dunaway began to formulate a proposal to study Lafayette's resiliency after the shooting.

Emergency response teams got high marks from the public. "But how can we describe what the community did? How did we come together?" Mallery said.

Because the scope of a community's response is multidimensional, Dunaway and Mallery put together an interdisciplinary team to help design an analytic model to assess a community's resilience and examine the effects of a crisis or disaster on a population. That team includes an economist, a historian, first responders, a statistician and representatives of United Way and Acadian Ambulance.

The team will analyze the economic and social impact of the shooting and develop a model for how civic leadership, social networks, communications and outreach can help a community recover from an incident like a mass casualty shooting.

Dunaway and Mallery received a \$195,000 grant from the National Science Foundation for the project. The team's findings are expected to be completed by the fall of 2018.

Mallery noted that this project "captures the 'research for a reason' mantra that the University has. Why are we studying this? It's because we want to make our community safer. We're not just working in isolation. The importance of this study transcends the perimeter of the University."





## Money Matters

University makes significant contribution to state, local economic health

How does the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's presence affect the state and local economies?

Appleseed, a New York City-based consulting firm, recently conducted an independent economic and community impact analysis for UL Lafayette. It has performed economic impact studies for private and public universities such as Tulane University, Harvard, The Ohio State University and Virginia Tech.

Factors that Appleseed considered include direct and indirect employment, the purchase of goods and services, the transfer of new technology into the commercial sector, and earnings of University graduates.

"The report is a tool we can use for a variety of purposes. It will serve as a benchmark for the University's impact in the future, for example. It paints a portrait of our strengths, as well as opportunities to contribute more to the state and region," said UL Lafayette President Dr. Joseph Savoie.

Here's a look at some of Appleseed's findings. Unless otherwise noted, statistics are based on fiscal year 2015 data.

The economic impact study was privately funded.

To read the complete report, go to [louisiana.edu/impact](http://louisiana.edu/impact).

UL Lafayette graduates increased Acadiana's gross domestic product

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STUDENTS, FACULTY & STAFF CONTRIBUTED



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**\$492.3  
MILLION**

IN LAFAYETTE PARISH

**\$1  
\$6.83**

For every \$1 in state funding, UL Lafayette generates \$6.83 in statewide economic impact.

*UL Lafayette spent*

**\$40.1M**



ON GOODS & SERVICES FROM LOUISIANA BUSINESSES

ANNUAL EARNINGS OF UL LAFAYETTE GRADUATES IN ACADIANA IS ABOUT

**\$710 MILLION**

HIGHER BECAUSE OF THEIR

**COLLEGE DEGREES**

## 'Earthzine' features doctoral student's marsh study

UL Lafayette doctoral fellow Samantha Hauser was near Brigantine, N.J., the day before Hurricane Sandy made landfall there on Oct. 29, 2012. She had been conducting research in a marsh on the coast of the Atlantic Ocean.

"I was about to leave and the marsh was covered with saltwater already," she told *La Louisiane*.

A New Jersey native, Hauser was pursuing a bachelor's degree in ecology and natural resources at Rutgers University at the time. "We were at least an hour or two inland and we were



Samantha Hauser, left, meets with Dr. Paul Leberg, a biology professor who is head of the University's Department of Biology.

still completely flooded from the saltwater coming into the Raritan River," she said.

"Superstorm Sandy" prompted her to think about the effect of hurricane winds, water and salt on wetlands. Part of

her senior thesis compared the damage to New Jersey coastal wetlands to help scientists prioritize remediation. Hauser studied aerial views of wetlands along Sandy's storm surge path – before and after it hit – to determine the damage done by saltwater intrusion.

Her findings were featured in November in "earthzine," a website about Earth science that operates with the support of the IEEE Oceanic Engineering Society.

Hauser's study showed that 41 percent of the wetlands she studied sustained severe degradation and most of the degradation was long-term.

According to Hauser's research, too much salt residue, or saltwater that remains in a marsh for too long, causes marsh dieback. Excessive salt makes it difficult for trees and plants to absorb water, which they need for photosynthesis. And, it can inhibit metabolic processes in some plants.

Wetlands are a barrier that, when healthy, help absorb the force of hurricanes. The loss of trees and vegetation in marshes leads to coastal erosion.

Hauser also developed a way to measure the monetary impact of "Superstorm Sandy" on New Jersey ecosystems.

"Of the \$9.4 billion value New Jersey freshwater wetlands provide annually, Hauser calculated a possible loss of \$4.4 billion due to Hurricane Sandy's storm surge. This value includes wind, flooding and salinity damage," the article on earthzine states.

Hauser told *La Louisiane* that she put her findings "into monetary terms so that everyone could appreciate the amount of ecosystem services and benefits that we all get from them. I think that's the biggest thing: to appreciate our wetlands."

## Transfer of retired chimpanzees underway

Sixteen retired research chimpanzees from the New Iberia Research Center have settled into a new home.

All 220 chimpanzees at the center will ultimately be transferred to the new 236-acre Project Chimps sanctuary in northern Georgia. The first social group of nine chimpanzees arrived there on Sept. 8; seven joined them on Nov. 30.

The chimpanzees travel in small groups composed of up to 10 members. It will take three to five years for Project Chimps to move all 220 retired chimpanzees. The Center and Project Chimps will determine which groups move at what time, based exclusively on the well-being of the nonhuman primates. Chimpanzees require specialized handling and care.

Project Chimps, a nonprofit

organization, secured an agreement with the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's NIRC to resettle and provide lifetime care for the center's entire research chimpanzee population.

"We feel confident that Project Chimps will provide the nonhuman primates with the high-quality care that they have been accustomed to receiving," said Dr. Francois J. Villinger, NIRC director.

UL Lafayette is contributing funding for the chimpanzees' care at the sanctuary.

University officials said they planned retirement and sanctuary for its chimpanzees for more than two years



Most retired chimpanzees at the New Iberia Research Center were not used for any research projects.

before the first group was transferred to the Project Chimps facility. The "vast majority" of chimpanzees at NIRC were never part of any research, Villinger said.

For more information about the sanctuary, visit [ProjectChimps.org](http://ProjectChimps.org).





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# on campus

## Serendipitous Encounter

French student who thought she was stranded found guardian angels

**C**heryl Evans, former associate dean of students, retired from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette more than 15 years ago. That doesn't mean she's quit helping students.

Just ask Céline Goujon of Paris, who arrived in Lafayette in mid-August, in the midst of the Louisiana Flood of 2016. It has been described as the nation's worst natural disaster since Hurricane Sandy lashed the eastern seaboard in 2012. The unnamed storm saturated portions of Louisiana for days. Flooding claimed 13 lives and damaged hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses.

Goujon, a fourth-year mechanical engineering student at Pôle Universitaire Léonard de Vinci in Paris, had arranged to spend one semester studying at UL Lafayette. She was scheduled to arrive in Lafayette on Saturday, Aug. 13. Lafayette Regional Airport, however, was closed. So, she spent the night in Atlanta at a hotel.

She reached Lafayette on Sunday. Having seen only brief TV reports while in Atlanta, she didn't realize the severity of the weather situation in Lafayette. Many streets were filled with high water, which limited travel. The University, though not flooded, was closed, so residence hall move-in had been postponed.

Goujon hit her first snag when she tried to phone a taxi. She struggled to make the call on her cell phone, which has an international number. She sought assistance from Evans, who was returning from a 2½ week vacation in France with her husband, Taylor. The couple and Goujon had traveled on the same flight from France to Atlanta, and from Atlanta to Lafayette. They didn't realize it, though, until later.

"This precious young French woman came up to me and asked, 'Can you help me phone a cab?'" Cheryl Evans recalled in an interview with *La Louisiane*.

She helped Goujon place the call. They learned it could be hours before a cab might be available. Evans realized that



Taylor and Cheryl Evans' home became a sanctuary for student Céline Goujon.

transportation would only be the beginning of Goujon's challenges. She wouldn't be able to check in to a University residence hall. Lodging citywide was scarce since hotels were packed with displaced residents.

For Cheryl Evans, who has a grown son and a grown daughter, a blend of motherly concern and former University administrator instincts kicked in. Sensing Goujon was rattled and afraid, she asked the 21-year-old student if she would like a ride and help trying to get moved into her dorm room.



"I knew what this poor young woman was facing. I said, 'I once worked at the University and I think we can help you,' " she recalled.

Goujon readily accepted the offer. "I had a good feeling about them," she said in heavily accented English. "I was scared at the beginning, because I didn't know them, but after I saw they were connected to the University, I felt comfortable."

Goujon's mother, Karinne Goujon, didn't. When Céline phoned her mother and mentioned her plans to venture into an unknown, weather-torn city with strangers, the elder Goujon "was not too happy," Taylor Evans said with a laugh.

Goujon describes her mother's reaction diplomatically: "She was very worried." But Goujon was able to put her more at ease during the conversation.

"She was relieved when I told her the Evans were great people and that they were helping me."

The "University family" lent a hand, too, Cheryl Evans said.

The Evans drove Goujon to campus, having to detour around flooded areas three times. "Once we got there, things started moving," Cheryl Evans said.

She called Pat Cottonham, the University's vice president for Student Affairs. Cottonham, who became associate dean of students after Evans retired in 2000, contacted Rose Honegger, director of the Office of International Affairs. Honegger arranged for Jules Breaux, the University's director of Housing, to help Goujon settle in.

The Evans sensed that Goujon, alone on an empty campus, was still shaken and uncomfortable. The couple invited their new friend to dinner, and to spend the night at their home. Again, Goujon accepted. The next day, the Evans took Goujon shopping to get supplies for her dorm room and for her classes.

As the semester progressed, the bond the Evans and Goujon had formed blossomed into a friendship. The Evans extended an



Celine Goujon, left, shares a cup of coffee with Cheryl Evans.

open invitation to their house for Goujon to study, hang out, eat a bite, or have a cup of coffee. Goujon dropped by the Evans' home regularly and spent a long weekend there. She and a friend also ate Thanksgiving dinner with the couple.

"This is my American family," Goujon said.

Evans said the relationship has been fun and rewarding. "We have loved the experience."

Goujon chose UL Lafayette because "it has a very good mechanical

engineering program," and she relished the chance to experience a culture that shares so much with her home country.

"I was excited to visit Louisiana because your culture is French – the names of streets, the names of places, the names of people, are French," she said.

Goujon enrolled in three mechanical engineering classes and one civil engineering course during the fall semester. She quickly adapted to campus life.

She attended an international student orientation, made friends immediately, and started participating in campus activities, such as attending a karaoke party with Chi Alpha Christian Fellowship, and swimming at the Student Aquatic Center. She also visited New Orleans, Biloxi and Dallas.

She's a fan of the City of Lafayette. "The downtown is so cute and everyone here is really friendly."

Goujon, who returned to France in December, expects to complete her studies and earn a mechanical engineering degree in about one year.

She also plans to keep in close contact with her new friends.

"In March, they are going to Tel Aviv, and, on their way, are going to stop in Paris," Goujon said.

Added Evans: "We'll be there for three nights. Her mother's going to come up from Nice, hopefully, and her sister is in Paris, so we'll get to meet her family."

## Helping Hands

Students, employees recovering from flooding got some TLC

When an epic deluge soaked south Louisiana at the start of the Fall 2016 semester, the University got in gear to help students, faculty members and staff cope with the aftermath.

Here are some examples of its assistance.

- Faculty members excused students who were forced to start the semester a few days late and helped them catch up.
- The tuition payment deadline was canceled.
- A payment plan was offered to students who had to tap into money set aside for tuition.
- The University made public appeals for contributions

to its Annual Fund. All donations made to that fund through September were earmarked for students affected by flooding.

• UL Lafayette distributed \$95,000 to help students overcome financial hardships; each qualified student received at least \$500 applied toward their tuition or other educational expenses.

• Special leave was available for employees who couldn't return to work because of damage to their own property or close relatives, such as elderly parents who required help.

The University also offered free replacement diplomas to alumni whose original certificates were destroyed by floodwater.

# Remembrance Rituals

University acknowledges deaths of students, employees

In recent years, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette has added to its traditions of acknowledging current students' and employees' deaths. The most visible has been lowering the University flag in front of Martin Hall, which began in 2015.

"Lowering the flag is a small gesture, but it means a lot," said Aaron Martin, the University's chief communications officer. "It represents mourning. It's also a sign of respect that's appreciated by loved ones and friends."

The flag with the University Seal is lowered concurrently with the person's memorial service; a social media announcement is posted; and, in the case of a deceased student, a photograph of the flag at half-staff is sent to his or her parents.

The University flag is flown at the Louisiana Welcome Wall, which also features the U.S., Louisiana and Acadiana flags. The American flag is lowered on Memorial Day and by order of the U.S. president, or the state governor, for the deaths of noteworthy people and tragic events with statewide, national and international impacts.

Each spring, for nearly a decade, UL Lafayette has hosted a Night of Remembrance to honor students, faculty and staff members who died the previous year. In 2015, University

President Dr. Joseph Savoie began presenting diploma-style certificates at the annual observance to parents of deceased students to commemorate the students' enrollment.

It is a long-standing practice for a University representative to attend local funerals of students and employees. In 2015, University Police Chief Joey Sturm began to send an Honor Guard to students' funerals with the consent of their families. University Police also dispatches a uniformed officer and patrol car to help escort the funeral procession.

Other universities have taken notice. Several have expressed an interest in adopting UL Lafayette's memorial procedures, according to Martin.

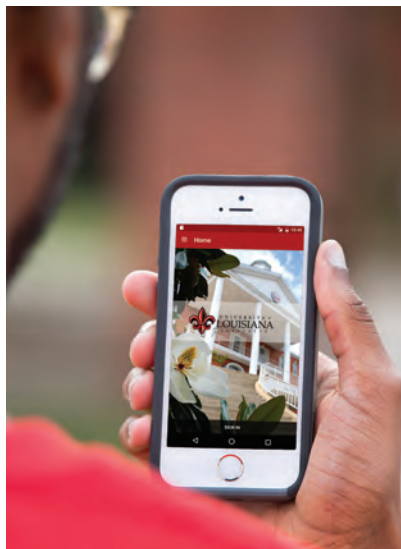
"Remembering our University's members not only benefits those who are grieving, it reminds all of us to make the most of our remaining days," Martin said.



The University lowers its flag to pay tribute to its students and employees.

# Better, Faster

University offers an improved, expanded mobile app



Download of the new app is free.

A new UL Lafayette mobile app turns cell phones and tablets into powerful tools for students, faculty, staff and visitors.

It provides students with seamless access to some of the most frequently used University systems and accounts, so they can perform tasks and get information on the go. They can use it to view their schedules and academic history, access email and review their statements of account, for example.

Graduate student Robert Tarleton was one of the first to test the app. "I love how clean the design is and how easy it is to use," he remarked.

The app gives faculty and staff access to University systems. It

also connects UL Lafayette fans to University news, events, sports and social media.

A campus directory enables users to call main University numbers with one touch on their screens. An interactive University map offers students and visitors a mobile tour that includes images, descriptions of major buildings and addresses.

"I can see the map being super useful for incoming freshmen," Tarleton said.

This app replaces the one released by the University in 2011. It's available to download for free for Apple and Android devices at the App Store and Google Play.



# Hello Vélo

Introduction of bike share program makes cycling a convenient way to go



Courtney Cangelosi gets ready to take a bike out for a spin.

Michael Remedies, a freshman computer science major from Many, La., values the University's Geaux Vélo bike share program for one reason.

"I like knowing it's there in case I wake up late and need to get to class quickly," he said.

His use of the bike rental program has been solely on campus. But students, faculty, and staff are able to take the bikes all over. Riders are pedaling to destinations around Lafayette, from stores to music concerts, according to Gretchen Vanicor, director of UL Lafayette's Office of Sustainability.

"I get photos from people who see bikes at places like

Champagne's Market in the Oil Center and Downtown Alive!," she said. Over 2,200 riders have registered since the program began last spring.

A total of 52 bicycles are housed at three campus stations: 32 at Cajun Field, 10 outside the Student Union on Boucher Street, and 10 in Girard Park Circle Parking Garage. More bikes will be added. Two stations will be established later this year: one in downtown Lafayette and another near the intersection of W. Congress Street and Cajundome Boulevard. Each will have 10 bikes. Rental costs are free for the first hour, \$1 for the second hour, and \$1 for the third. Hours four through eight are free. The cost for each hour after the eighth is \$1. Bikes are due back to their original station by midnight.

"We have some riders with more than 40 rides who have never been charged, because they always return the bikes within an hour," Vanicor said.

Riders register online at [geauxvelobikeshare.com](http://geauxvelobikeshare.com).

They receive a user name and PIN number after providing financial information via a credit or debit card. A student can use his Cajun Card, which doubles as a UL Lafayette ID and debit card. A rider then enters his PIN number — or swipes his University ID or driver's license — to obtain a key at kiosks near each station. The key unlocks a bicycle and must remain inside a lock while it's being ridden.

The bikes are supplied by Rugged Cycles, a company in Bryan, Texas. Each has an aluminum frame atop tires of solid rubber that won't go flat. The chains are enclosed to keep clothing or shoelaces from snagging. Baskets are mounted in back for carrying items such as school supplies or groceries.

## Sustainability efforts earn prestigious national recognition

UL Lafayette is one of just 11 postsecondary institutions — and the first and only one in Louisiana — to earn a pat on the back from the U.S. Department of Education for a campuswide commitment to sustainability.

The University was designated a 2016 Green Ribbon School. The honor singles out schools, from elementary to postsecondary, and school districts, that foster comprehensive sustainability programs and practices.

Green Ribbon Schools are recognized for "leadership in reducing environmental impact, improving health, and teaching environmental education," according to the Department of Education. The program was established in 2011. It began recognizing colleges and universities in 2015.

Gretchen Vanicor, director of UL Lafayette's Office of Sustainability, accepted the award for the University during a ceremony in Washington, D.C.

"To be selected in only the second year is an accomplishment that is indicative of the University's longstanding commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainability practices," she said.

The U.S. Department of Education commended UL Lafayette for a range of programs, practices, and initiatives, Vanicor said. They include campus recycling programs and tree preservation.

It cited the renovation and expansion of the Student Union, too. The project earned a silver rating from the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program. Several



Gretchen Vanicor

factors contribute to LEED certification, including types of construction materials used, energy efficiency and recycling.

Learn more about UL Lafayette sustainability and recycling at [sustainability.louisiana.edu](http://sustainability.louisiana.edu).

# Something's Brewing

Newest coffee features custom blend, eye-catching package

Mello Joy Coffee Company has created a custom blend Ragin' Cajuns™ French Roast Coffee in partnership with UL Lafayette.

The aromatic coffee is made with Arabica beans grown in Central and South America. The beans are widely considered some of the finest in the world.

They're roasted and ground in New Orleans by Decatur Street Services and delivered to Mello Joy in Lafayette the same day for immediate packaging.

"We're in love with this custom blend," said Greg Elmore, Mello Joy general manager.

Curtis Ball, roast master and manager at Decatur Street Services, collaborated with University and Mello Joy representatives to come up with its distinctive flavor.

Ball is one of only about 3,500 Q Graders in the world, coffee connoisseurs who have been certified by the non-profit Coffee Quality Institute. The designation requires extensive training, knowledge and industry experience.

Ball, who describes his occupation as akin to that of a sommelier, led a series of cuppings, or coffee tastings. Much like wine, coffee is tested for quality, flavor and aroma by smelling and sipping samples.

An integral part of the process requires letting coffee – brewed to predetermined dark roast specifications – steep for several minutes, or long enough to form a "crust." The term refers to coffee grounds that rise to the top of the liquid. Once the crust is "broken" by jostling the cup, the coffee's aroma is released.

"Any cup of coffee emits an aroma, but you get the biggest release of aroma when you break the crust at about four minutes," Ball explained.

The technique, when carried out by an expert such as Ball, enables a variety of tweaks to increase the quality of a given blend, including bean selection, and modifications to the roasting process. The objective is to develop the perfect specifications for a particular blend.

Ball describes Ragin' Cajuns™ French Roast Coffee as "a dark roast with a lot of body, and a sweetness, a chocolaty flavor."

Courtney Jeffries, assistant director of Creative Services for the University's Office of Communications and Marketing, designed the new coffee's bag. It features a vintage

porcelain pot and two cups brimming with coffee.

She painted the original image by dipping a brush into coffee. She rendered contrasting hues on the predominantly brown package using a variety of techniques.

"The bag is like nothing else on the shelves. It looks like the table you grew up sitting around," Elmore said.

Ragin' Cajuns™ French Roast signals the continuation of a partnership between UL Lafayette and Mello Joy that began in 2014. That's when the Ragin' Cajuns Strong Championship Blend was introduced as a novelty coffee. It celebrated multiple Sun Belt Conference Championships that had been won by University sports teams.

The championship blend was packaged in a small, commemorative bag that featured the University's colors and its athletics logo. The package was emblazoned with photos of coaches who had guided University teams to recent SBC Championships.

Elmore said the new, custom blend—and the bag that holds it—were produced to occupy a permanent space in the marketplace.

"We viewed the first effort as sort of a one-off, but we wanted to do something that won't become dated," he said.

Mello Joy began distributing the new blend in January.

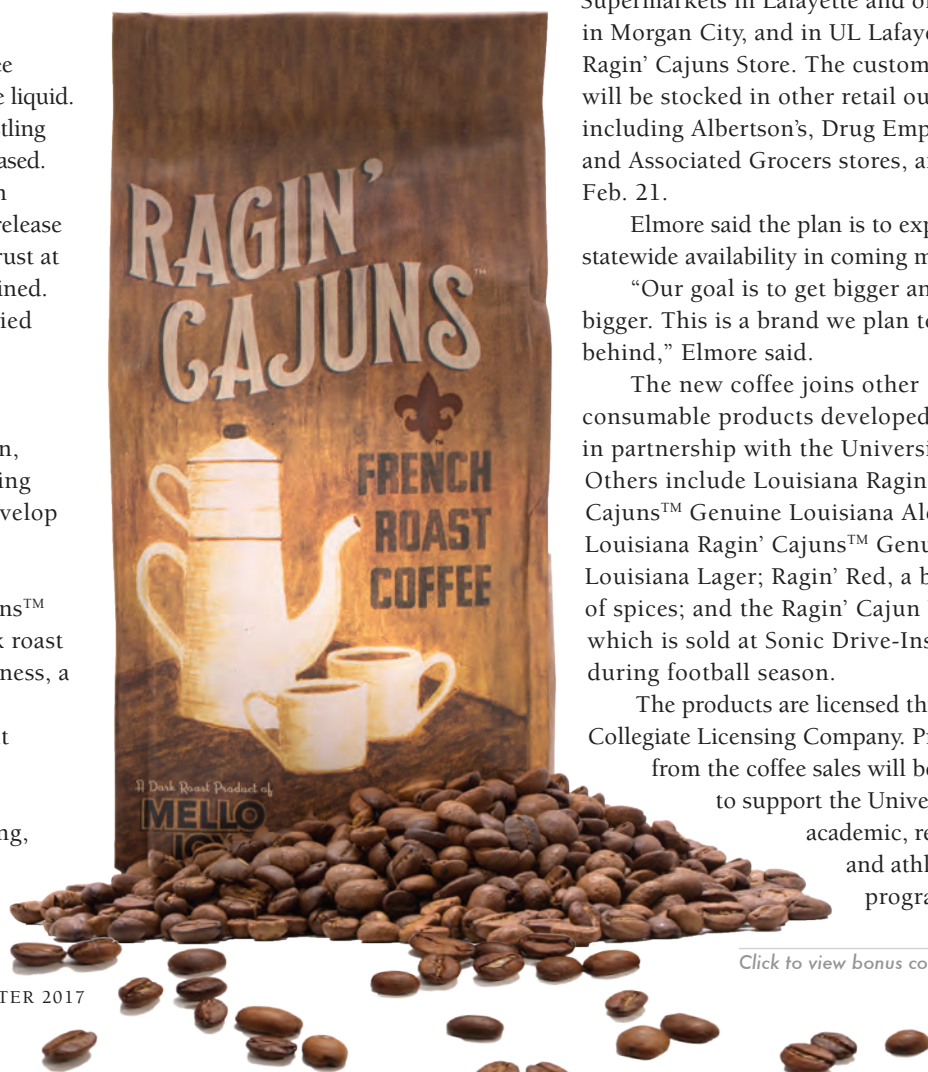
It was introduced at three Rouses Supermarkets in Lafayette and one in Morgan City, and in UL Lafayette's Ragin' Cajuns Store. The custom blend will be stocked in other retail outlets, including Albertson's, Drug Emporium and Associated Grocers stores, after Feb. 21.

Elmore said the plan is to expand statewide availability in coming months.

"Our goal is to get bigger and bigger. This is a brand we plan to stand behind," Elmore said.

The new coffee joins other consumable products developed in partnership with the University. Others include Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns™ Genuine Louisiana Ale; Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns™ Genuine Louisiana Lager; Ragin' Red, a blend of spices; and the Ragin' Cajun Burger, which is sold at Sonic Drive-Ins during football season.

The products are licensed through Collegiate Licensing Company. Proceeds from the coffee sales will be used to support the University's academic, research and athletics programs.



Click to view bonus content. 



# Ragin' Cajuns cerveza-style craft beer now on shelves

Ale or lager?

The introduction of Ragin' Cajuns™ Genuine Louisiana Lager has given craft beer fans options. It debuted at Cajun Field at the first game of the 2016 football season and was sold on tap at other establishments. It became available in bottles by late November.

The lager is the second beer produced through a partnership between the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and Bayou Teche Brewing in Arnaudville, La. In fall 2015, Ragin' Cajuns™ Genuine Louisiana Ale was introduced; it quickly became a top seller.

The creation of Ragin' Cajuns™ Genuine Louisiana Lager made sense, according to Karlos Knott, president of Bayou Teche Brewing. "In the world of beer, a beer is either an ale or a lager," he said.

He describes the new addition as a smooth, cerveza-style beer. "Anyone who drinks a Mexican lager will recognize this beer. It's a beer that doesn't take itself too seriously."

The yeast used to brew lager is different than the yeast used to produce ale. It takes six weeks or more to brew a lager, while an ale can be produced in two to three weeks.

"Also, a lager brews a lot colder, so it's a lot crisper, a lot easier to drink. It allows the ingredients to shine more than an ale," Knott said.

Both beers feature Louisiana ingredients for their distinctive tastes.

Ragin' Cajuns™ Genuine Louisiana Lager uses Bernard's Honey,

which is produced at Bernard's Apiaries in Breaux Bridge, La.

Louisiana rice is used in Ragin' Cajuns™ Genuine Louisiana Ale.

"Both beers are designed to go with food. When you think of lager, you think of drinking it with something spicy, which is what most people do at tailgating," Knott said.

The ale and lager are sold on tap at the Cajundome during Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns® basketball games and other events.

The easiest way to determine where the Ragin' Cajuns™ Genuine Louisiana brews are sold is through Schilling Distributing Company Inc.'s exclusive LiquidFinder smartphone app. The free app is available for download at the App Store and Google Play.

Schilling Distributing is the official beer distributor of Ragin' Cajuns Athletics.

Kody Thompson, marketing manager for Schilling Distributing, estimated that 70 percent of the retailers in the company's six-parish distribution area that stock Genuine Louisiana

Ale also sell the new lager.

Ragin' Cajuns™ Genuine Louisiana Ale won a 2016 Southern Living Food Award. It was featured with other award winners in a special section of Southern Living magazine's June issue.

Ragin' Cajuns™ Genuine Louisiana Lager and Ragin' Cajuns™ Genuine Louisiana Ale are licensed through Collegiate Licensing Company. Some of the proceeds from the craft beer sales are used to support the University's academic, research and athletics programs.



## Fine Art

### Ragin' Cajuns tradition captured by acclaimed printer

A custom Wear Red poster has been created by Hatch Show Print in Nashville, Tenn.

The world-famous poster shop uses centuries-old letterpress printing for a classic look that was used to promote events until offset printing gained popularity in the second half of the 20th century.

"Wearing red every Friday is a tradition that visually conveys support for the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. This poster turns that practice into a piece of artwork that has a recognizable style that's been popular and collectible for decades," said Leslie Saloom, assistant director of Trademark Licensing at UL Lafayette.

The 13½-inch by 22¾-inch posters are sold at Paul and Lulu Hilliard

University Art Museum, 710 E. St. Mary Blvd.; bookstore.louisiana.edu; and the Ragin' Cajuns Store at 1805 Johnston St.

Proceeds support the University's academic, research and athletics programs.

Letterpress is a centuries-old printing technique that uses wood or metal to press ink onto paper. It revolutionized printing and enabled the mass production of written communication. It was an especially effective way to promote events, such as musical performances, circuses and vaudeville acts, in its heyday from the mid-1920s to the early 1950s.

Today, letterpress is used primarily for fine art and stationery.

Hatch Show Print, which has been in operation since 1879, designs and prints 500 to 600 posters per year.



[Click here to purchase.](#) 



## Louisiana to LA

Interns get experience with NFL team with lagniappe on HBO reality show

Players and coaches on the Los Angeles Rams' football team weren't the only ones working hard and hamming it up during episodes of the HBO reality TV show "Hard Knocks."

The series offers a behind-the-scenes peek at one NFL team during training camp. "Hard Knocks," which is produced by NFL Films, featured the Rams in a handful of documentary-style broadcasts on the cable channel.

Eddie Avak and Brad Reaux, two athletic training majors who are set to graduate in May, interned with the team as it readied for the 2016 season. They landed the gig thanks to Dr. Randy Aldret, director for UL Lafayette's athletic training program and an assistant professor in the School of Kinesiology.

"I checked in with a buddy who is an assistant with the Buffalo Bills and he didn't have any open spots. But he pointed me to the Rams, who did. So Eddie and Brad ended up going out there for eight weeks," Aldret explained.

Avak and Reaux worked with the Rams from mid-July to early September at the team's training camp at the University of California, Irvine, near Los Angeles. While responsible for a range of duties, their chief role was to support the team's medical staff.

They performed a multitude of tasks, from taping up players' gimpy ankles before practice to providing first aid for minor on-the-field injuries to assisting players with rehabilitation exercises after long, arduous workouts.

Avak and Reaux were among six college students who interned with the Rams in the 2016 preseason. With only 32 teams in the league, the internships are coveted.

Avak worked with wide receivers, while Reaux worked with defensive linemen.

They also delivered a few doses of comedy that earned each a turn in the spotlight.

In episode two of "Hard Knocks," Reaux appeared in a funny exchange with two burly linemen, Eric Kush, a center who was ultimately cut by the Rams and now plays for the Chicago Bears, and Rodger Saffold, the Ram's starting guard.

Each player is at least 6'4" tall, and weighs well over 300 chiseled pounds. Reaux, 26, who joined the U.S. Army after high school, is anything but out of shape. He is, however, an average-sized man in comparison to the football players.

In the scene featuring Reaux and the two players, all three are wearing identical, sleeveless tank tops that sport an American flag. Reaux had spotted the two linemen wearing the shirts and was surprised, since he owned the same shirt.

"I remember looking at Eddie, and told him 'I literally have one of those shirts and I have it with me.' So I went back into my room and put the shirt on and walked outside. The players were like, 'No way,' and the camera people saw us and rushed in," Reaux said.

In the clip, Saffold quips to Reaux: "You've got the clothes, but you have to work on the body." Reaux, not missing a beat, flexed and looked down at his right bicep. "I was like, 'You guys need to catch up. These eggs are cracking.'" Reaux's slangy reference to his much smaller biceps sent the two hulking linemen into fits of laughter.

Physical appearance also led to Avak's time on film. The 29-year-old, from Modesto, Calif., has a dark, bushy beard. During filming, so did Brandon Fisher, the Rams' defensive backs coach who is the son of head coach Jeff Fisher.

The resemblance between Avak and the young coach became a running joke between Rams players and staff members. It also became the inspiration for a "Hard Knocks" bonus segment titled "Who's the Guy with the Beard?"

**'We felt more prepared, in terms of classroom education and clinical education, than a lot of the interns that were there.'**

**— Brad Reaux**

The segment captured a series of humorous exchanges based on the physical similarity. In one clip, Rams assistant head coach Dave McGinnis, at the urging of the elder Fisher, approaches

Brandon Fisher to rib him about the look-alike intern.

McGinnis approaches Brandon Fisher, and asks him why he's carrying water bottles around, while pointing to Avak, who is holding Gatorade to give to thirsty players.

Avak, who, like Reaux, is easy-going with a good sense of humor, was not only unfazed by the attention, but would have been fine without it.



Dr. Randy Aldret



DOUG DUGAS

Brad Reaux, left, and Eddie Avak made an impression during training camp.



DOUG DUGAS

“It was kind of strange, because I’d rather hang out in the twilight, than be part of the limelight. You’d turn the corner and boom, there’d be a camera in your face,” Avak said.

Avak and Reaux say they didn’t travel to the entertainment capital of the world to prep for careers on TV. They were there to work and gather experience.

They succeeded. There were many seven-day work weeks, filled with long days that began before the sun rose and ended long after it had gone down.

“We started about 6:45 in the morning and it honestly depended on the day, but we were averaging somewhere around 12-15 hours a day,” Avak said.

Each man traveled with the team to an away preseason game. Avak flew with players, coaches, and team personnel to Minneapolis for the Rams game vs. the Minnesota Vikings. Reaux accompanied the team to Denver for its game against the Broncos.

The pace and travel ruffled neither. Both say training they’ve received at UL Lafayette, in the classroom and working with Louisiana Ragin’ Cajuns student-athletes, left them thoroughly qualified for a stint in the NFL.

“I think we’ve both handled more,” Reaux said. “We felt more prepared, in terms of classroom education and clinical education, than a lot of the interns that were there.”

Avak agreed: “I think we both felt like we were ahead of the curve when working with high profile athletes on a day-to-day basis.”

The athletic training majors tape the ankles of a couple of members of the Louisiana Ragin’ Cajuns track team.



# 1,000th graduate

RN to BSN online program reaches milestone



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Taiye Ajayi

Taiye Ajayi took her first trip to Lafayette in December to accept a diploma for a bachelor of science in nursing degree.

A resident of Bay Minette, Ala., she is the 1,000th graduate of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's RN to BSN online program.

"I'm so happy that I went for that program. It was one of the best decisions I've ever made," she said.

The 100 percent online program gives a nurse who holds an associate of nursing degree the flexibility to continue working while completing a bachelor's degree in nursing in as few as 12 months. Enrollment for UL Lafayette's RN to BSN online program began in March 2012.

Ajayi wants to become a nurse practitioner, so she went straight into the RN to BSN program after earning an associate of nursing degree from Jefferson Davis Community College in Brewton, Ala., in 2015. Although her job didn't require a BSN, she decided to continue her education without missing a beat.

"I just decided to do it instead of wasting time. Sometimes, when you don't back your decision with action, you may eventually change your mind and give yourself one million reasons for not wanting to do it. Before I went to the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, I made so many inquiries and read many reviews to be sure I was heading in the right direction.

"The cost was very affordable and they were very flexible with me. Other schools insisted that I needed to complete all of my prerequisites before embarking on their programs, but UL told me I could start the program while completing my other three classes. That made it so easy for me."

Ajayi works in the emergency room at North Baldwin Infirmary in Bay Minnette. She had moved from Nigeria in 2012 to join her husband, who was attending school in the United States.

**'I had a 2-year-old and a 6-month-old and was working full-time when I started. It's very, very doable once you start. Go for it.'**

**– Taiye Ajayi**

Earning a bachelor's degree online enabled her to maintain her regular work schedule. That flexibility was one of the biggest selling points of the program for her. "You don't have to travel anywhere. You just have to know the dates of your deadlines, put

them in your calendar and set a reminder for yourself. The good thing is that most of the classes follow the same pattern and before you know it, you are done with the program," she said.

Ajayi said she was able to immediately apply what she was learning online as she pursued a bachelor's degree.

She recalls a class discussion about ways that nurses can help lower health care costs, such as preventing deep vein thrombosis in patients and hospital-acquired urinary tract infections. The class also talked about ways that managers can reduce costs. Monitoring the excessive use of hospital supplies was one example.

"From that moment we had the discussion, I have always been very careful not to fill my pocket with materials or wound care supplies that patients may end up not using, so as to contain costs. I try as much as possible to link the care I am giving to my patients to the overall cost."

Ajayi encourages anyone who is considering enrolling in the RN to BSN program at UL Lafayette to "go for it."

"It's not too late and no need to procrastinate. For nurses who are working full-time and have little kids, it's very doable. I am a living example. I had a 2-year-old and a 6-month-old and was working full-time when I started. It's very, very doable once you start."

For more information, visit [degree.louisiana.edu](http://degree.louisiana.edu).

## Online nursing degree program meets national demand



Dr. Melinda Oberleitner

The 1,000 graduates of the University's RN to BSN online program are filling a need for more baccalaureate-prepared nurses across the country.

"There is a huge focus on increasing the national percentage of nurses with a BSN to 80 percent by the year 2020," said Dr. Melinda Oberleitner, associate dean of the College of Nursing and Allied Health Professions.

In 2010, the Institute of Medicine established that goal to help manage changes in the health care system. Also, research shows that nurses who receive bachelor's-level preparation have better patient outcomes than nurses who

hold associate degrees, including lower mortality rates.

UL Lafayette's RN to BSN program graduates represent 30 states, including Louisiana.

"Some states in the western and northeastern parts of the U.S. give preferential hiring to BSN grads; some do not hire associate degree nurses at all," Oberleitner said.

"Among the predominant reasons nurses tell us that motivate them to enroll include looking to be more marketable. A BSN degree gives them enhanced professional marketability. They are seeking promotion to a role such as a nurse manager, which requires the BSN. Or, they want to enroll in graduate school to earn an MSN to become nurse practitioners or other advanced practice roles, nurse executives, or nurse educators and they must complete the BSN first."

# Cook, Hazelwood make school history together

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette's Ellen Cook and Anita Cook Hazelwood have added the title "Dr." to their names. They simply refer to each other as sister.

Cook, assistant vice president for Academic Affairs, and Hazelwood, director of the Health Information Management program, have worked at UL Lafayette since 1977 and 1976, respectively.

They share more than the same parents and place of employment.

The sisters are the University's first students to earn a doctorate in educational leadership, with a concentration in higher education.

professors at UL Lafayette. Karen Cook taught criminal justice, until deciding to pursue a law degree.

Ellen Cook and Hazelwood stuck with higher education.

It was a wise choice.

Both rose to their current positions, and attained the rank of full professor along the way, in a way uncommon in higher education — without doctoral degrees.

In 2013, the University added a higher education concentration to its doctorate in educational leadership. Until then, the doctorate had included only a concentration for K-12 teachers.

enrollment numbers to justify offering the program."

One of Cook's many duties at the University is to help implement new academic programs. When she realized she could fulfill a lifelong dream, and count herself among the 14-student cohort needed to launch the new doctorate, her decision was easy.

Hazelwood, on the other hand, quips that her decision to pursue a doctorate in educational leadership was made for her by her older sister.

"I only did it because I was kind of bullied into it," Hazelwood said jokingly, "but that's OK, because I'm very glad I did. It's a great program."

Both Cook and Hazelwood said the curriculum helped them round off skills they had developed over their 30-year careers in higher education, and enabled them to add knowledge they can weave into their current roles.

It also revealed a personality trait shared by both women: determination.

The program consists of night and weekend classes that added to their already stacked workloads. The curriculum consists of 57 hours of coursework, and six credit hours of dissertation work.

Since the sisters share a house in Lafayette with their mother, Joycelyn Cook, who is 89, neither liked leaving her alone as often as was necessary to meet the demands of work and study.

But Cook and Hazelwood persevered, and were on track to put the finishing touches on their dissertations. Cook's delves into the state's GRAD Act; Hazelwood's is about university mergers.

Then, in mid-August, the Flood of 2016 saturated portions of Louisiana with days of rain. The unnamed storm claimed 13 lives and damaged hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses.

In the case of Ellen Cook, Hazelwood, Joycelyn Cook and Karen Cook, who was visiting, water flooded their neighborhood and home. They had to be rescued by boat.

They brought only what was important with them for the journey, their "two dogs, and two computers, double-wrapped in garbage bags, because they held our dissertations," Ellen Cook said.



Dr. Anita Hazelwood, left, and Dr. Ellen Cook stroll along the Walk of Honor on campus.

They were hooded during the Fall 2016 Commencement General Assembly.

Cook, 64, and Hazelwood, 62, grew up in Houma, La., daughters of an accountant father, and an elementary schoolteacher mother. They have a younger sister, Karen, an attorney, and a younger brother, Bert, who works in public relations.

Cook earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University and a master's degree in accounting from LSU; Hazelwood holds a bachelor's degree in medical records science from the University and a master's degree in library science from LSU.

At one time, all three sisters were

Both programs are geared toward educators who are in leadership positions, or who aspire to be. The higher education concentration includes a range of courses, which cover subjects ranging from legal and public policy issues, to fiscal management and student affairs.

For Cook, the decision to enroll in the new program was a no-brainer.

"Earning a doctorate was something I always wanted to do, and the educational leadership program made sense for me because, as an administrator, it was an opportunity to learn so much, and I did," she explained. "Besides, I needed the

DOUG DUGAS



An aerial photograph of a coastal region in Louisiana. The image shows a mix of blue water, green marshland, and a small cluster of buildings and trailers along a narrow strip of land. The title 'ENGULFED' is overlaid in large, white, distressed letters at the top.

# ENGULFED

By Charlie Bier | Photography by Doug Dugas

Coastal erosion is sinking Isle de Jean Charles in Terrebonne Parish, the ancestral home of members of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw tribe of Native Americans. About 300 residents are preparing to resettle, thanks to an almost \$50 million federal grant. The relocation effort is one of the first of its kind in the U.S. for “climate refugees.” Before the island becomes only a memory, Dr. Heather Stone, an assistant professor at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, has begun gathering oral histories from tribal members. She’s recording and cataloguing the stories, customs, and traditions that provide a framework for the tribe’s identity.







Maryline Naquin, a member of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw tribe of Native Americans, has lived on Isle de Jean Charles, a tiny slice of land in Terrebonne Parish, for all of her 71 years. Since the 1960s, she has occupied a home across a bayou from a patch of land where the house in which she was born once stood.

As a child, Naquin never dreamed that the short distance between her two homes would one day almost equal the width of the entire island, which is being swallowed by coastal erosion. In 1955, Isle de Jean Charles was about 22,000 acres. It's now about 320 acres, as narrow as a quarter-mile wide in some places.

Hurricanes and storm surges, and saltwater intrusion caused by dredging for oil and gas pipelines and canals, have gnawed at the island. Hundreds of people once lived on Isle de Jean Charles. Today, only about 25 families – 70 people – remain. That number includes some residents who aren't members of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw tribe. Fishermen began buying camps on Isle de Jean Charles after Island Road was built in 1953 to connect the community to nearby Montegut, La. Before that, the island had been accessible only by boat.

"Everything has changed so much," Naquin said one recent fall day, weaving palmetto fronds into baskets and hats under a golden afternoon light as a breeze rustled banana trees in her yard.

She is referring to more than topography and population. With the land went a way of life rooted in self-sufficiency. Residents once hunted, trapped, fished, raised cattle and grew crops, such as rice and potatoes, on the island. They plucked oranges and pecans from groves of trees. They built and crafted what was needed for survival, from houses to pirogues.

Those days are long gone, said Dr. Heather Stone, an assistant professor at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. For about a year, she has been working on an oral history project to gather and archive the recollections of tribal members.

"I want to tell the story of a resilient people who escaped to Isle de Jean Charles and sequestered themselves there and had to figure out new ways of living," said Stone, who became involved after the island was discussed at a Louisiana Historical Association meeting.



Maryline Naquin is a lifelong Isle de Jean Charles resident.

## Heavy rains often strand residents

Isle de Jean Charles is believed to have been settled in the early 1800s. With little recorded history, accounts vary as to whether the Chitimacha or the Choctaw were the first inhabitants. It got a big boost in population with an influx of Native Americans who migrated there following the Indian Removal Act of 1830. The law authorized President Andrew Jackson to relocate tribes from their ancestral homes in the southeast to federal lands in Oklahoma. The forced removal became known as the "Trail of Tears." Many Native Americans balked, including a group of early Isle de Jean Charles settlers, who arrived from Alabama and Mississippi.

Over the years, marriages between members of the three tribes resulted in a consolidated Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw tribe. The small tribe, which exists only on and around Isle de Jean Charles, lacks federal recognition. Weather and economics are the forces that have splintered it.

Many residents were shooed from the island by the constant prospect of having to rebuild or repair homes after storms; others were driven away by an inability to get to and from jobs in nearby communities. The 3-mile-long Island Road often floods during heavy rains and with storm surges. Residents can't drive onto or off the island until the water recedes.

"People who really didn't want to leave have had to because they felt they didn't have a choice. It wasn't safe for them, and they couldn't get ahead," Stone explained.

Tribal chief Albert Naquin, Maryline Naquin's brother-in-law and a direct descendant of the tribe's first



Tribal chief Albert Naquin has pushed for the relocation of island residents for over 15 years.





Fishermen and others began buying camps and homes on Isle de Jean Charles after Island Road was built in 1953.

chief, Jean Baptiste Narcisse Naquin, lives in nearby Point Aux Chenes. He moved from Isle de Jean Charles in the mid-1970s, after Hurricane Carmen struck. “I had to go to work every day, and saltwater and cars don’t mix,” said Albert Naquin, 70, a retired inspector for the Minerals Management Service, and a U.S. Army veteran.

## HUD earmarks relocation funds

Isle de Jean Charles, which is split by a narrow, winding street lined with a scattering of houses, resembles a ghost town minus tumbleweeds. Instead, it’s dotted with a few gnarled, leafless oak trees deformed by saltwater, scraggly remnants of vast stretches of forest that once blanketed the island.

“To me, it’s like night and day. We used to live off the land, and now, all a few can do is live on the land. It’s tough,” Albert Naquin said.

Soon, the fading community might actually be a ghost town. Many residents are bracing to resettle in a new, federally funded community. In early 2016, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded a \$48 million grant for a relocation effort. The money was carved from a total of \$92.6 million allocated to Louisiana for regions that have been declared major disaster areas.

The Lowlander Center, a nonprofit in Terrebonne Parish, helped the tribe apply for the grant. The center, as its name indicates, supports low-lying areas through a range of initiatives, including advocacy, education and research.

Dr. Kristina Peterson, director of the Lowlander Center, said she and Albert Naquin began collaborating on a resettlement about eight years ago. She describes tribal members as “heroes” for their perseverance.

## This community will lead others

The state’s Office of Community Development is in charge of allocating the federal grant. Many aspects of the impending move are still being decided. Details as fundamental as where the



Isle de Jean Charles is about 25 miles southeast of Houma, La.

new community will be established, for example, are still being sorted out.

Pat Forbes, executive director of the Louisiana Office of Community Development, said state officials and residents have started collaborating on a master plan.

“We’ve begun interviewing residents to ascertain their wants and needs. Some say they would like space to be able to grow crops. Some would even like houses atop stilts, because the areas underneath their houses have become social gathering spots. The process is in its initial stages, with much planning still up in the air,” Forbes said.

One thing is certain. The resettlement will be historic. The HUD grant has been termed the first in the lower 48 states allocated for communities displaced by environmental factors, such as natural disasters and habitat loss.



“Louisiana’s coast is losing land faster than any other coastal area in the country. Isle de Jean Charles is one of, if not *the*, most endangered communities on our coast. Residents have been seeking a means of relocation for years now, meaning they are likely more prepared than other coastal communities to actually make the move,” Forbes said.

The new community will ideally serve as a template for imperiled coastal communities across the nation and in Louisiana, including communities damaged by hurricanes.

“By going through this process with this community, we will learn a great deal about what works and what doesn’t work. We will discover steps that we didn’t know were necessary and we’ll have a better understanding of the costs. By documenting this process, we’ll provide at least a compass, if not a road map, for how to do it better next time,” Forbes said.

## Move offers a chance for healing

The entire Isle de Jean Charles resettlement process could take several years. The grant money has to be obligated in 2017, or as Forbes explained, “committed to a specific purpose.” The funds must be spent by 2022. If, in the meantime, a hurricane or other large storm should wipe out Isle de Jean Charles, the state has begun putting together an interim housing plan. Such a scenario would not, however, jeopardize the resettlement project.

Albert Naquin, who has been working on relocation for more than 15 years, hopes the move offers a chance for a homecoming. He wants to reconcile as many members of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw tribe as possible. “It’s very important to keep our culture together, and to reunite everyone,” he said. “I would go immediately, if I could.”

He’s not sure if that will be possible. “We are working with (state officials) and hopefully we’ll have a say on where we go, who will be able to go, and what we get.”

As it stands now, the chief said, the resettlement is open to any residents of the island who are members of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw tribe, and tribe members who have moved away only since 2012. He hopes, however, that all tribe members will be able to resettle in the new community.

“To put us back together is the key thing we need. Other than that, our tribe will continue to break up and eventually we won’t have one.”

## Stories to be told through multimedia

For Stone, who teaches in the University’s College of Education, compiling the stories of residents as they prepare to leave their ancestral home dovetails with many of her professional goals and interests.

Stone is an adept interviewer who holds an undergraduate degree in journalism from the University of North Carolina. She also has experience on a large-scale oral history project. While earning her doctoral degree in curriculum and instruction at LSU, she completed an oral history about the desegregation of schools in Zachary, La.

Since she began work on the Isle de Jean Charles project, Stone has gone to great lengths to immerse herself in the community. She rented a small house near Isle de Jean Charles, where she works, hosts visitors and often stays for several days at a time while she conducts research.

“I want to not only document how the island came to be, and a sense of place, but how that changed and what has happened to the island due to the environment and how that’s affected the sense of culture and splintered the tribe,” she said.

Stone is also incorporating elements of the island’s move for use in elementary classrooms. She and colleagues at the University will record Albert Naquin and other members of the tribe for a virtual reality project. That component of her work will enable Stone’s students to build lesson plans to teach elementary students about Isle de Jean Charles. The younger students will wear a headset to navigate a virtual representation of Isle de Jean Charles. They will also see and hear the Native-Americans talk about island life, history and customs.

“Beyond the classroom, we’re thinking about using it as

an archiving tool. Instead of having just oral histories that can be listened to, we want to archive 3-D oral histories, including interviews, that can be viewed,” Stone said.

## Others contribute to resettlement

The professor isn’t the only one dedicated to preserving the history and customs of Isle de Jean Charles.



Dr. Heather Stone’s work will show future generations what life was like on Isle de Jean Charles before the water rose.

She is working closely with Chantel Comardelle, who lives near the island in Bayou Blue, is the tribe's secretary. While Stone works on her academic project, Comardelle, who works in the Finance Department of Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government, is studying to become the tribe's chief historian, archivist and curator. Comardelle, whose family left the island when she was 4 years old, after Hurricanes Danny and Juan in 1985, recently enrolled in an online program in indigenous museum studies offered by the Institute of American Indian Arts.

The training will help her educate visitors in a cultural center and museum that tribe members want built at a new settlement. Comardelle envisions a center that would serve as an educational hub for school groups and tourists, and a repository for relics of the tribe's past. It would house everything from oral histories and photographs, to artifacts, tools and crafts that were once integral to life on Isle de Jean Charles.

"I've kind of taken it upon myself to learn and gather as much as I can so we can start to save and rebuild our culture," she said.

Case in point: Comardelle is working with preservation-minded groups such as Common Ground Relief, a nonprofit founded shortly after Hurricane Katrina. The organization was formed to clean up New Orleans but now oversees a range of projects, including wetlands restoration.

Tom Pepper, executive director of Common Ground Relief, will consult with members of the tribe to gather a variety of grasses, seeds, and plants used for medicinal purposes. The effort is threefold: to determine what plants once grew on the island, how certain plants were used, and to collect samples. What is retrieved from the island – and plants that no longer exist but can be found



State coastal restoration efforts have included the use of sediment to form terraces intended to slow erosion and ultimately help rebuild fragile marshes.



Imminent relocation has prompted the collection of plants that grow on Isle de Jean Charles.



elsewhere – will be replanted at the new community.

So far, an initial search of the land has yielded only scant traces of what Comardelle believes was once there. There have been a few interesting finds, though, including a “toothache” tree, called a pepperwood, with leaves that numb the mouth when chewed.

“Having these types of things at our new settlement is one way we can keep a link to our ancestors and our land,” Comardelle said.

## Research to expand to nation’s capital

In November, Stone’s and Comardelle’s efforts got a boost when they were awarded a Recovering Voices Community Research Program grant.

As part of the program, the Smithsonian Institution collaborates with communities and scholars from around the world to identify and share cultural heritages, information, and artifacts housed at the Smithsonian and other museums.

Stone, Comardelle and Albert Naquin will travel to the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C., sometime later this year. They will pore over land and genealogy records, photos, letters, manuscripts, and historical objects. They plan to record what they find by taking notes, photos and videos, and making photocopies.

They will also conduct research at the National Museum of the American Indian, the National Archives, the

National Museum of American History, and the National Anthropological Archives. All are in Washington, D.C., with the latter two inside the Smithsonian.

In addition to content about the consolidated Isle de Jean tribe, they will glean material about the Biloxi, the Choctaw and the Chitimacha tribes. Stone, Comardelle and Naquin will also research records related to the Trail of Tears, in an attempt to reconstruct possible routes members of each of the three tribes might have traveled to get to the island.

“This will allow the tribe, and me as a researcher, to learn more about its origins and assemble documentation about its history,” Stone said.

The material will be shared between the tribe and the University. The tribe will keep the materials, and copies will be archived in the University’s Special Collections in Edith Garland Dupré Library.

## Residents have mixed feelings

For remaining residents of Isle de Jean Charles, the pressing need to preserve its history underscores a grim reality. Despite the island’s vulnerability and imminent demise, some inhabitants, including Maryline Naquin, are ambivalent about leaving. She will miss simple things, such as calm, quiet afternoons spent sipping coffee in the yard of the home where she has lived for more than half a century. “I’m not thrilled to think about moving, but I know it’s going to happen one day.







The Rev. Roch Naquin celebrates Mass daily.

So what can you do?"

Wenceslaus Billiot Sr., a World War II veteran who lives with his wife, Denecia, in an elevated home across the street from Maryline Naquin, grieves for the lost land and way of life. "Lots of times, I think about how things were when I was young," Billiot, 90, said.

He often stands on his back porch and looks out over a sweep of water that was once solid marshland. "When I was a kid, you could walk out into the marsh. No problem. Now, everything is washed away." The view might be diminished, but it isn't one he relishes abandoning. "I don't think I'm ready. I would rather stay. I was born and raised here," said Billiot, who as a boy paddled an hour and a half to and from school in a pirogue built by his father.

### **'At some point, everyone will have to go.'**

Two past relocation attempts have failed.

In 2008, after Hurricanes Gustav and Ike slammed the island with wind and water in a span of about two weeks, Albert Naquin led a resettlement effort with a hand from the parish. Government officials tried to help Isle de Jean Charles residents relocate to nearby Bourg, La., but the effort stalled.

A previous resettlement push, in 2002, came after the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers decided boundaries of a new levee system

Wenceslaus Billiot Sr., 90, has watched solid land wash away.



Resident Chris Brunet and Dr. Heather Stone sift through photographs of houses that remain on the island.

to protect communities along the Louisiana coast. The agency determined it wouldn't be cost effective to include Isle de Jean Charles inside the levee. Instead, it offered to help find a nearby place where the community could resettle.

That effort died because a majority of Isle de Jean Charles residents didn't want to leave.

As part of the latest relocation plan, Forbes said residents who don't want to leave the island won't be forced to move.

Albert Naquin, on the other hand, says that eventually, time and nature will force all residents from Isle de Jean Charles. "At some point, everyone will have to go, whether they want to or not. It's just a matter of when," he said.

The Rev. Roch Naquin, 84, is a first cousin of Albert Naquin. He is a retired Catholic priest who grew up on the island and left as a teenager. He was ordained in 1962 and assigned to a range of parishes in and near New Orleans and southwest Louisiana. When he retired in 1997, he wanted to return to his birthplace and minister to Native Americans there.

The island has never had a church. Before Roch Naquin moved home, a priest from nearby Montegut would visit monthly to celebrate Mass and hear confessions. Now, Roch Naquin celebrates Mass daily at his house on the island, as well as the homes of others. He admits he has "struggled" with the prospect of leaving Isle de Jean Charles.

"My first choice would really be to stay here, but I know the risks," he said. "While there is an opportunity to relocate to higher ground, a safer place, wisdom tells me it's better to move than be stubborn, stay here, and have something terrible destroy everything."

Island resident Chris Brunet, 51, sums up residents' situation this way: "It's hard to make a change based on what's going to happen in the future. The island is here now," he said, although he concedes that "one direct hurricane, a bullseye, will wipe it out."

After a pause, he added: "The relocation is something that needs to be done, but it's not a celebration."

[Click to view bonus content.](#) **La**




# DEAR WORLD

More than 400 members of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette community used their bodies to express themselves during the recent Dear World College Tour.

Dear World began in 2009 when founder Robert Fogarty asked New Orleans residents to “write a love note to their city,” four years after Hurricane Katrina brought their home to its knees.

Since then, Dear World has traveled around the globe to take portraits that use ink on skin to convey what people want others to know.

To see more images taken at UL Lafayette, go on Facebook and search for “University of Louisiana at Lafayette Dear World.”

[Click to view bonus content.](#) 

























## Brand New Look

Intricate court design, displays make Ragin' Cajuns® feel at home

**T**he recent \$22 million renovation of the Cajundome makes it clear that the arena is branded as the home of Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns® basketball.

The building sports bold University of Louisiana at Lafayette graphics in the south lobby, upper concourse and lower concourse. They include a timeline for the University's basketball programs, and photos and banners that salute some of its best former student-athletes.

A highlight: an intricate resurfaced court that depicts Cypress Lake, complete with an egret flying overhead.

Courtney Jeffries, '98, assistant director of Creative Services in the University's Office of Communications and Marketing, designed the court and arena graphics. "We wanted to bring a part of campus into the Cajundome," she said.

Based on research she conducted, the Cajundome now has one of the most detailed court designs in the nation. She estimated that it took 60 hours to draw Cypress Lake on a computer for the court. The challenge: using highlights and shadows to make it more than a silhouette.

The 94-foot by 50-foot court is made of 225 panels of northern maple that are pinned together. It was dismantled and shipped to Praters Hardwood Floors in Chattanooga,

Tenn., in September. There, it was reassembled and the wood was sanded. The new Cypress Lake design was applied using a stencil and three coats of a custom-mixed wood stain.

Mike Trotter, portable floor sales manager at Praters, said the stencil had many small pieces because of the complex design of Cypress Lake. Those pieces had to be removed by hand to reveal the wood that was not stained.

Many Prater employees chipped in to keep the project on track. "It was taking quite a long time to pull out all the small pieces. So, we had people from the bookkeeper to salesmen to the president of the company on their hands and knees, pulling up those pieces," he said.

The court took seven weeks to prepare, from sanding to installation. A time-lapse video shows how it was done.

The finished court was dismantled and transported to the Cajundome, where it was reassembled over two days.

Praters handles 50-60 basketball courts each year. "I've seen basketball courts all over the United States, from the University of Maine to the University of California. I believe I have a new favorite," Trotter said.

To see the time-lapse video of the creation of the basketball court, go to <https://youtu.be/yoDInV22h3c>







Banners in the lobby salute basketball standouts through the years.



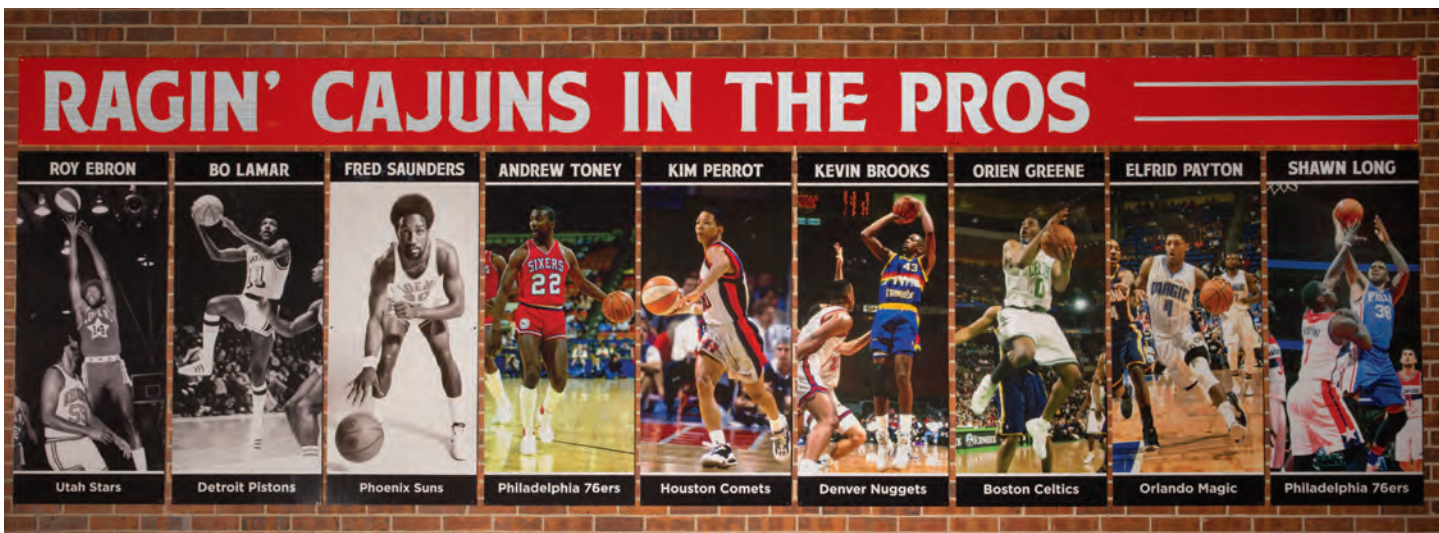
Photos flank the main entrance into the Cajundome arena.



A timeline traces the development of the men's and women's basketball programs. It features milestones, coaches, players and fans, beginning in 1909.



Words from the University's fight song are combined with images of game highlights and Ragin' Cajuns teams.



One wall of the lobby is devoted to former Ragin' Cajuns who went on to play professional basketball, such as Dwight "Bo" Lamar and the late Kim Perrot.



# Sound Effect

Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns® have a new way to celebrate

A 2,866-pound victory bell has been announcing Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns wins since it was activated in September.

"It's a fun way to celebrate success. In today's high-tech world, it's a throwback to a simpler time when a bell was used to announce an event to a community," said UL Lafayette President Dr. Joseph Savoie. "We hope that this traditional way of letting people know of our victories will promote pride in the University."

The bell rings for all Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns' home, away and postseason victories.

It also peals at Commencement each fall, spring and summer to acknowledge graduates' academic success. The first Commencement ceremony marked by the chimes was on Friday, Dec. 16, for the largest fall semester graduating class in school history. A total of 1,435 bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees, graduate certificates, and post-baccalaureate certificates was awarded.

The bell, which is 42 inches at its base, hangs in a tower at the south end zone of Cajun Field. The tower is at the center of UL Lafayette's Edgar G. "Sonny" Mouton Jr. Sports and Entertainment Plaza.

The cast bronze bell was custom-made in Annecy, France, at Fonderie Paccard. That company has made

about 1,200 bells since it began operation in 1796.

Raised fleurs-de-lis are on both sides of the bell. The University's name is in French on the front, along with the year the school was established – 1898. "Lafayette" is on the back.

The bell's electro-mechanical clapper is activated electronically. The bell can be rung using a mobile device from any location.

It rings for five minutes for all home, away and postseason victories, 10 minutes for conference championships and graduations, and 15 minutes for individual and team NCAA national championships.

The bell is activated immediately after the conclusion of all road games and matches for each sport and for the following home events:

- football, following the team singing the fight song to the student section;
- soccer, immediately after the recorded fight song plays;
- volleyball, immediately after a match;
- basketball, following the teams singing the fight song on the court;
- baseball, after playing the Kool & The Gang song, "Celebration";
- softball, following the team's "Ragin' Cajuns" chant;



- golf, immediately following a tournament;
- track/cross country, immediately after a meet; and
- tennis, immediately following a match.

Also, a recording of the victory bell ringing is played over the public address systems after Ragin' Cajuns men's and women's basketball games in the Cajundome and volleyball games in Earl K. Long Gym.

The victory bell was purchased with private funds.

## Plaza named for senator who championed sports facilities



Edgar G. Mouton Jr.

A section of campus that encompasses the Cox Athletics Center, Cajundome and Convention Center was recently named by the Louisiana Legislature to honor the late Edgar G. "Sonny" Mouton Jr.

A popular, longtime state senator and political leader, Mouton was instrumental in the construction of Cajun Field and the Cajundome, and helped to secure millions of dollars for other capital improvement projects at the University. He died in March; he was 86.

The area between West Congress Street, Bertrand Drive, Reinhardt Drive and Souvenir Gate was named the Edgar G. "Sonny" Mouton Jr. Sports and Entertainment Plaza. Gov.

John Bel Edwards signed Act 492 authorizing the name in June after unanimous approval by the Louisiana House of Representatives and the Louisiana Senate. The legislation was authored by Sen. Page Cortez.

"It's a fitting tribute for a leader who was such an avid supporter of the University," said Dr. Jessica Leger, interim director of Athletics.

Mouton was a Democratic member of the Louisiana House of Representatives from 1964-66 and the Louisiana Senate from 1966-80. He was an influential leader who served as executive counsel to Gov. Dave Treen from 1980-83 and as special counsel to Gov. Edwin Edwards in 1985.

Mouton, a Lafayette native, was a leader in the passage of the 1974 Louisiana Constitution and was a candidate for governor in 1979. He held a bachelor's degree and law degree from Tulane University in New Orleans.

## More Inclusive

All UL Lafayette grads are now members of the Alumni Association

**T**he University of Louisiana at Lafayette's Alumni Association began 2017 with a revised membership structure.

In short: If you're a UL Lafayette graduate, you're in.

"You don't have to pay to be a member. You're automatically a member and you receive basic benefits," said Jennifer LeMeunier, '92, executive director of the Association.

For more than 10 years, annual Association membership cost \$40 for one person and \$60 for a married couple.

Now, membership levels are based on the concept of philanthropic giving, LeMeunier explained. A UL Lafayette graduate who gives \$100 or more to the Alumni Association's Loyalty Fund is entitled to premium benefits. Others may join the Association by contributing to the Loyalty Fund.

"We want to make sure we're reaching young alumni and are including all of our graduates in the organization. You don't have to pay to be involved," she said.

"We're taking a leap of faith to move to a philanthropic structure instead of a 'give to get' structure. We encourage alumni to give to the Loyalty Fund because it's a way to show their pride and support. It's a way for them to thank their university for the impact it has had on their lives. We're hoping that through this change, we can appeal to different audiences."

The new approach is modeled after philanthropic structures at other universities, such as Ohio State University. "It was a successful transition for that university. They didn't lose supporters. They gained supporters," LeMeunier said.

Contributions to the Loyalty Fund will

enable the Alumni Association to continue to support traditional alumni events, such as Homecoming; recognition of outstanding alumni and volunteers; scholarships; student activities; and partnerships with other campus organizations that provide services to alumni.



The Association began to call attention to the revised membership structure by presenting a special lapel pin to each graduate during Commencement in December.

"When they received their diplomas, an Alumni Association representative handed them a pin," LeMeunier said. "Presentation of the pins is a way to convey to our newest alumni that they're automatically Association members and to encourage them to wear their pins proudly." The pins will be given to grads during all fall, spring and summer Commencements.

One of the Association's goals for 2017 is to increase communication with more graduates. In the past, for example, Alumni Association members received a printed copy of its *Alumni Accents* newsletter twice a year. Now, the Association plans to send *Alumni Accents* in an electronic format to members every other month. Contributors to the Loyalty Fund will also receive a printed edition of the newsletter once a year.

One of the keys to successful communication with members will be obtaining up-to-date contact information. "We continuously look for ways to collect, or get our alumni to provide to us, current information so we can reach them – not for fundraising purposes but to stay connected," LeMeunier said.

The Alumni Association will launch a redesigned website this spring. The new site will be housed on the University's server and will follow the same format as other UL Lafayette websites.

"This will enable our staff to make updates and improvements more quickly and efficiently. It's a very positive move for us," LeMeunier said.

The Association will continue to use social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, to promote events and stay in touch with its members. To learn more about the revised membership structure or update contact information, visit [louisianaalumni.org](http://louisianaalumni.org).



Jennifer LeMeunier, executive director of the Alumni Association, presented lapel pins to football players who graduated in December. A special Commencement was held for them before the R+L Carriers New Orleans Bowl.



# alumni

## 1952

**JOSEPH W. COOPER** recently retired from the violin section of the Shreveport Symphony Orchestra. He is a retired commercial account executive with Goodwill Industries of North Louisiana. Cooper was a U.S. Air Force pilot who served two and a half years in Japan during the Korean conflict. He holds a bachelor's degree in liberal arts. He and his wife, **DONNA BROUSSARD COOPER, '52**, live in Shreveport, La. They have a daughter, Pamela Montgomery, and a son, Patrick Cooper.

## 1969

**WARREN PERRIN, '69**, and **MARY BROUSSARD PERRIN, '70**, were awarded the Foundation of France's international literary prize, le Prix France-Acadie, in Paris in



November 2015. The Perrins co-authored *Acadie Then and Now: A People's History*, with Canadian writer Phil Comeau. The book is the first written about Louisiana to win the award and the Perrins are the first Americans to ever receive the prize. A study of Acadians around the world, it includes a collection of articles written by 55 authors. Warren Perrin holds a bachelor's degree from USL in economics and a juris doctorate from LSU Law Center. He is an attorney in Lafayette. Mary Perrin is an artist and author. She earned a

bachelor's degree in education from USL and holds a master's degree in visual arts from Vermont College of Fine Arts. The Perrins have three children, Mary Perrin Ouelett, **ANDREW PERRIN, '99**, and **BRUCE PERRIN '11**.

## 1971

**DANIEL L. HAULMAN** is a historian at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Ala. During his 34-year career at the Air Force Historical Research Agency, he has written several books and articles about aviation history and was a consultant on Tuskegee Airmen films and museum exhibits. Haulman earned a bachelor's degree in social studies education from USL, a master's degree in education from the University of New Orleans and a doctorate in history from Auburn University. He and his wife, Ellen Evans Haulman, have a son, Evan Haulman, and live in Montgomery.

## 1974

**BILLY DALTON** is a singer and guitarist in Blackwolf, a folk-rock band. He is the retired president of Aspen Land Services, an oil and gas company. Dalton holds a bachelor's degree in political science. As a member of USL's track team from 1970 to 1973, he competed in the pole vault. He and his wife, Marian, live in Houston and have two children, Shannon Reid and Shayne Dalton.

## 1975

**DWAINES LAWLESS** read an excerpt from her novel, *Cajun Moon*, at the



inaugural Dave Robicheaux's Hometown Literary Festival in New Iberia, La., in April.

The mystery and paranormal romance novel was published by 2nd Tier Publishing in Texas. Lawless holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education from USL and a master's of special education from the University of Texas at Austin. She lives in Austin.

## 1976

**DWIGHT F. DAVID** is an artist who paints landscapes in Brittany, France. He holds a bachelor of arts degree from USL and a master of arts degree from the University of New Orleans. He and his wife, Monique, have a daughter, Danielle.

## 1978

**RODERICK J. BERGERON** is territory sales manager for Bumper to Bumper Auto Parts in Monroe, La. He holds a degree in business education. He is married to Janice Fontenot Bergeron, who also attended USL. They have two children, Christopher Bergeron and **RACHEL BERGERON FONTENOT, '05**, who received a bachelor's degree in math education. The Bergerons live in Arnaudville, La.

**KEILA DAWSON** is the author of a children's book published by Pelican Publishing Company in 2015. Entitled *The King Cake Baby*, it is a Louisiana re-telling of "The Gingerbread Man" fairy tale.

Dawson holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education from USL and a master's degree in special education from the University of New Orleans. She and her husband, Dr. Robert Frenck Jr., live in Cincinnati. They have two children, Kelsey and Connor.

## 1979

**ROBIN BREAUX MENARD** is chief financial officer at Ernest P. Breaux Electrical Inc., a construction company that specializes in large electrical projects. She is also a board member of the Iberia Investment Group and a member of Bernhard LLC. Menard holds a bachelor's degree in accounting. She and her husband, Tracy, live in Youngsville, La. Their son, Austin Menard, is a UL Lafayette student.

## 1988

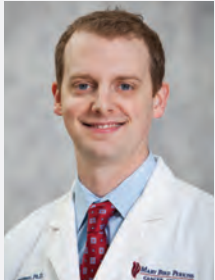
**JOSEPH SCIVICQUE** is an electrical engineer and network architect at CenturyLink headquarters in Monroe, La. He worked on the company's network transformation to voice over IP, which enabled the service provider to develop online phone call features for businesses. Scivicque and his wife, Charlotte, have two children, Abigail Scivicque, who is a student at UL Lafayette, and Robert Scivicque.

## 1989

**RICHARD HUNT** is president and chief executive officer of the Consumer Bankers Association in Washington, D.C., an organization that represents the retail banking industry. Hunt earned a bachelor's degree in business administration.

## Medical physicist coordinates measured assault on cancer

When LSU's tiger mascot, Mike VI, was taken to Mary Bird Perkins – Our Lady of the Lake Cancer Center last summer for treatment, Dr. Jonas Fontenot orchestrated his care.



Dr. Jonas Fontenot

Fontenot is chief of medical physics there. A medical physicist is a scientist who collaborates with physicians, neurologists, specialty nurses and others to provide tailored doses of radiation therapy to patients.

The Bengal/Siberian tiger mix was diagnosed in May 2016 with spindle cell carcinoma, which is incurable in humans. He may have been the first tiger to be diagnosed with that cancer; he is believed to be the first to undergo radiation therapy for it. He was treated at the Cancer Center on June 1, after regular business hours.

Veterinarians hoped to prolong Mike VI's life from a week or two to a year or more. But he was euthanized five months later, when they determined that the cancer had spread.

As a UL Lafayette freshman from Crowley, La., Fontenot thought he wanted to become a civil engineer. However, a chance encounter with Dr. Louis Houston, a former University physics faculty member, put him on a career path that ultimately led him to the Cancer Center.

Fontenot was a student working part-time at a produce stand when he met Houston, who was shopping there. "Dr. Houston started telling me about physics in a little more detail, about the problems physicists are interested in solving and their approach to solving them. It really appealed to me," Fontenot recalled in a recent interview.

After talking with some other UL Lafayette faculty members, Fontenot changed his major to physics.

He was a junior when he began to contemplate what career a physics degree would enable him to pursue. Dr. John Meriwether, a UL Lafayette physics professor who is now retired, introduced him to Danny Landry of Lake Charles, La., who had studied medical physics after earning a bachelor's degree in physics from USL. After learning more about medical physics from Landry, Fontenot was hooked. He went on to receive a bachelor's degree in physics.

Fontenot completed a summer internship at the University of Texas at Houston cyclotron laboratory, which produces medical isotopes, before entering



Dr. Jonas Fontenot oversaw Mike VI's radiation simulation on May 28.

graduate school. He earned master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer/Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at Houston in 2005 and 2008, respectively.

Fontenot soon joined the Cancer Center, where he held several positions before being named its chief of medical physics in 2015.

He recently helped integrate a new piece of equipment, the Leksell Gamma Knife® Icon™, at the center. It's used primarily to treat diseases of the brain – regardless of whether they are cancerous. "Although it's got the word 'knife' in the title, it's actually noninvasive, using radiation. You get the precision of the surgeon's scalpel and through the use of very large doses of radiation, you're able to completely eliminate diseased tissue," he said.

"It takes an entire array of physicians from different backgrounds to be able to use the device to its maximum capabilities," he continued. It also takes a strong medical physics team.

"The tissues in your body always remember how much radiation they received. So, if you don't get it right the first time, it's difficult or impossible to go back and do it again."



Members of Mike VI's care team prepare to transport him following his treatment on June 1.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LSU SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

PHOTO COURTESY OF LSU SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE



## ALUMNI INFORMATION FORM

If you enjoy reading about where your former classmates are now and what they're doing, consider this: They'd like to read about you, too. Please fill out the form below and mail it back to UL Lafayette or go to [louisiana.edu/louisiane](http://louisiana.edu/louisiane) to submit the information online.

## NAME

FIRST MIDDLE LAST MAIDEN NAME

## ADDRESS

STREET OR BOX

CITY STATE ZIP

## PHONE

HOME OFFICE

## E-MAIL

## FAX

## MAJOR &amp; DATE OF GRADUATION

OR THE SEMESTER YOU LAST ATTENDED THE UNIVERSITY

## CURRENT JOB TITLE

## BUSINESS NAME

## BUSINESS ADDRESS

## PROFESSIONAL DUTIES

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## SPOUSE'S NAME

FIRST MIDDLE LAST MAIDEN NAME

## SPOUSE'S USL OR UL LAFAYETTE GRADUATION DATE

AND MAJOR, IF A FORMER UL LAFAYETTE STUDENT

## CHILDREN

(IF ANY ARE UL LAFAYETTE STUDENTS OR USL GRADUATES, PLEASE INDICATE)

## CURRENT DATE

Please mail this form to , Box 43567, Lafayette, LA 70504-3567

or send it online at [louisiana.edu/louisiane](http://louisiana.edu/louisiane)

## 1991

**CLARE LANDRY MARTIN** is a poet whose second book of poems, *Seek the Holy Dark*, is to be published in 2017 by Yellow Flag Press. In 2012, Press 53 published her debut collection of poetry, *Eating the Heart First*. Martin is founder and editor of Mocking Heart Review, an online poetry magazine. She lives in Youngsville, La. She and her husband, Dean, have a daughter, Madelynn.

## 1993

**DWANA R. CALHOUN** works for the Patient Advocate Foundation as director of the SelfMade Health Network, an organization that focuses on reducing and eliminating tobacco-related health risks and cancer risks in low socioeconomic populations. She attended the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and earned a master's degree from Old Dominion University. She holds a bachelor's degree in biology from USL; as a student, she was a member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority. Calhoun lives in Covington, Ga., with her two children, Alexis and Ashley.

## 1995

**TRAVIS ARMAND** is a special education teacher for children in kindergarten through second grade at Bunkie Elementary Learning Academy in Bunkie, La. He has been a member of the Bunkie City Council since 2000, and also is a board member of the George Washington Carver Community Center in Bunkie. Armand holds a bachelor's degree in political science. He and his wife, Sarah, have a daughter, Vivian.

## 1999

**DAVID MALDONADO** has a role in "Deepwater Horizon," a recently released movie about an explosion and fire on an offshore oil rig that

killed 11 workers in April 2010. Almost 5 million barrels of oil spilled into the Gulf of Mexico after the explosion. Maldonado portrays Curt Kuchta, Deepwater Horizon's captain. He has appeared in television shows, including "Treme", "True Detective" and "Friday Night Lights"; movies; commercials; and theater. He holds a bachelor's degree in general studies. Maldonado and his wife, Lori, have two children, Brooks and Livia. They live in Houston.

**ERIK TAYLOR** is district ranger of the Austin-Tonopah Ranger District in the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest in Nevada. He holds a bachelor's of science degree from UL Lafayette and a master's degree in urban forestry from Southern University in Baton Rouge, La. He has worked at national forests in Michigan, Kentucky, northern California and New Mexico.

## 2003

**HEATHER CYPEL** is founder and owner of Acadiana Memories, a historical preservation company based in Lafayette. Cypel, who holds a bachelor's degree in history, conducts interviews with individuals and preserves their life stories in audio form. She also started a Facebook group, Acadians Memories, where people can share experiences about life in Louisiana. Cypel worked as a landman in the oil and gas industry for a decade before starting Acadiana Memories.

## 2005

**LAUREN GRIFFIN BROWN** is events coordinator for the Baton Rouge General Foundation, a non-profit organization that raises funds to support programs, research and services at Baton Rouge General Medical Center. She holds a bachelor's degree in hospitality management. Brown and her husband, Brandon, live in Prairieville, La.

# 2014

**STEDMAN TIEDEMAN** is a composer who also writes film scores. After earning a bachelor's degree in music, he started SJT Creations. Tiedeman and his wife, Vickie, live in Jennings, La. They have three children, Aaron Tiedeman, Ryan Tiedeman, and **REBECCA TIEDEMAN CORMIER, '12.**

## In Memoriam

**GRACE B. SAVOIE, '39**, a retired teacher, died Dec. 27, 2015. She was 96. Savoie taught in Cameron and Calcasieu parish public schools and Our Lady's School in Sulphur, La.



She and her late husband, Garfield, owned and operated Savoie Frozen Foods in Sulphur for over 30 years. She was a member or leader of numerous community organizations, such as the Senior Citizen Center of Sulphur, Brimstone Museum, and Calcasieu Council on Aging. Savoie was also a member of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher for the Roman Catholic

Diocese of Lake Charles, La., and founder of and coordinator for an ecumenical prayer service with several churches for over 30 years. She received a papal medal, Pro Ecclesia Et Pontifice, the highest honor bestowed to laity by the pope. Savoie also received a Diocesan Distinguished Service Award for Acts of Charity and Evangelization presented by the Catholic Diocese of Lake Charles. She was the recipient of the Maple Leaf Award presented by the Roman Catholic Church for continuous work in her retirement years. The Sulphur Mayor's Commission for the Needs of the Handicapped honored her with its Volunteer of the Year Award. Savoie was the Kiwanis Christmas Parade marshal for the City of Sulphur; was named a Community Hero by United Way of Southwest Louisiana, and was named Citizen of the Year by the Southwest Louisiana Chamber of Commerce. As a student at Southwestern Louisiana Institute, now known as the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, she was a member of the Red Jackets, a spirit organization. She is survived by seven children: Ron Savoie, Celeste Landry, Louisiana Third Circuit Court of Appeal Judge Kent Savoie, John Savoie, Annette Maneille, **UL LAFAYETTE PRESIDENT DR. JOSEPH SAVOIE, '76, '81,** and Pete Savoie.

## ALUMNI PROFILE: MELANIE BENIT, '15

### Grad zeroes in on homeland security



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Melanie Benit

Melanie Benit recently rode to class every morning along the beaches of the Mediterranean Sea. An electric scooter named Miles took her from Tel Aviv, Israel, to the nearby Interdisciplinary

Center of Herzliya, where she completed a master's degree in counterterrorism and homeland security in November.

While studying, Benit was a research intern at the International Institute for Counterterrorism, an independent think tank that provides expertise in counterterrorism, homeland security, intelligence analysis and defense policy. There, she analyzed areas of religion, governance, financing, and radicalization within the scope of national security. She was able to work with renowned professors and experts on how to combat the growth of global, jihadist terrorism.

A master's candidate at the Raphael Recanati International School of Government, Benit was immersed in Middle Eastern culture while taking courses such as The Anatomy of Terrorist Groups, Radical Islamic Ideologies, and Terrorism Financing, in addition to studying Arabic and Hebrew.

"These classes teach the fundamental terrorism issues: the definition of terrorism, the strategies, the current trends of global jihadi terrorism and more. We recommended and analyzed ways to counter the different aspects of terrorism," she told *La Louisiane*.

For her final project, Benit partnered with a professor, Dr. Amichai Magen, to develop a Middle East and North Africa report apropos

the "weak/failing states" phenomenon. Through extensive research of government structures and religious belief systems, she analyzed factors contributing to the inability or unwillingness of governments to provide for their citizens. She completed her curriculum and is waiting for her final project to be approved; her degree will be conferred in July.

Benit earned bachelor's degrees in political science and marketing. She held leadership roles within the Student Government Association, Louisiana College Republicans and Delta Delta Delta sorority at UL Lafayette.

As a junior, Benit participated in the Study Abroad program in Florence, Italy. At the time, she was set on a career as a lawyer, but the prospect of traveling the world changed her goal.

"The courtroom became less and less appealing as I realized what a vast world there is to explore," she said. "I altered my electives from law school preparatory courses to ones with a global scope. I studied Middle Eastern affairs and began reading about war strategies."

During her senior year, Benit took several opportunities to travel and study international relations. She was selected to study economics in Santiago, Chile, at the Institute for Leadership in the Americas. She also spent a summer working in Washington, D.C., for Otto Reich, former U.S. ambassador to Venezuela. During that internship, Benit attended CIA briefings and meetings on Capitol Hill, researched Latin American affairs, and networked with professionals ranging from Louisiana congressmen to international ambassadors.

Benit recently returned to the United States and has applied to work for the federal government. She hopes to represent the U.S. on an international platform and someday serve as an ambassador.

— Mary Cormaci

**MARGARET MCMILLAN, '40**, an



offshore safety pioneer, died Aug. 31, 2016. She was 96. In 1937, McMillan was one of the founding

members of the SLI Red Jackets spirit group. She was assistant dean of women after World War II. McMillan founded McMillan Swim School in 1962 and for decades taught countless children how to swim. After retiring from the University in 1976,



she founded McMillan Offshore Survival Technology and became internationally recognized as an expert in the field of sea survival technology. In 2004, McMillan became the first woman inducted into the Offshore Energy Center Hall of Fame in Galveston. In the late 1980s, she spearheaded development of the Marine Survival Training Center at USL. She is survived by her nephews, John H. McMillan III, W. Wikoff McMillan, James A. McMillan, and D. Haas McMillan; and a niece, Rosa Robin McMillan.

**JOE JAMAIL**, a prominent Texas personal injury attorney known as the “King of Torts,” died Dec. 23, 2015. He was 90. Jamail attended Southwestern Louisiana

Institute from 1947-48 and holds an honorary doctorate from UL Lafayette. He won Pennzoil’s \$10.5 billion lawsuit against Texaco in 1985, then the largest in history. He is survived by three children, Robert Lee Jamail, Randall Hage Jamail and Joseph D. Jamail III. He was preceded in death by his wife, Lee Hage Jamail.

**WARREN JOSEPH BOUDREAUX, ‘48**, died Saturday, April 23, 2016, at the age of 89. He had retired from Arabian American Oil Company in Saudi Arabia after 23 years of service. He is survived by his brother, Ursin Karl Boudreaux, a niece and two nephews.

**CHARLES D. BERNARD, ‘61**, died July 19, 2016. He was 76. A U.S. Army

veteran, he was a general agent with Transamerica Life Insurance Company for 50 years. Bernard was an active member of the Order of the Troubadours since 1973 and was King Richard Coeur de Lion XXXVI in 1988. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, **KAREN WILLIS BERNARD, ‘64**.

#### **EUGENE RAYMOND “RAY”**

**DESORMEAUX, ‘61**, died Aug. 9, 2016, at the age of 76. He was an engineer, developer and contractor who held a bachelor’s degree in engineering. DesOrmeaux was a special



consultant to the City of Lafayette mayor and City Council from 1985 to 1992. In 2005, he joined UL Lafayette’s Engineering Department as an adjunct instructor; in 2014, he became an assistant professor in the Department of Civil Engineering and the School of Architecture and Design. DesOrmeaux received the 2016 Engineering Faculty Professionalism Award. He received numerous other honors, including the Outstanding Alumni Award from UL Lafayette. His civic and community involvement included leadership positions with the UL Lafayette Alumni Association, UL Lafayette Foundation Board of Trustees, Lafayette Economic Development Authority, Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce,

## ALUMNI PROFILE: CHERYL MERCEDES FATZER-SHACKELFORD, ‘01

### *Reporter finds satisfaction in speaking for others*

An investigation into substandard living conditions in a Baton Rouge public housing complex earned Cheryl Mercedes Fatzer-Shackelford an Emmy Award.

The investigative reporter and evening news anchor for WAFB-TV in Baton Rouge received the Emmy, for continuing coverage, from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Suncoast Chapter.

Fatzer-Shackelford’s report, entitled “Nightmare on Elm Grove,” uncovered extensive health and safety hazards that had been neglected at Elm Grove Garden apartments, such as leaking plumbing pipes, exposed electrical wires, partially fastened balcony railings and pest infestations. Prompted by WAFB-TV coverage, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development representatives conducted an inspection of the federally subsidized complex and found some unacceptable conditions. Following the three-part series, some property improvements were made.

“There are murders, hurricanes, and other stories that can sometimes make you wonder why you chose this career. But the impact you can make in someone’s life or to an entire community outweighs those moments,” Fatzer-Shackelford told *La Louisiane*. “It is so rewarding to know that you have

helped someone, and to see their lives change because you simply took the time to listen and tell their story.”

Fatzer-Shackelford’s report also received second place in continuing coverage, Class A, from Louisiana Associated Press in 2014. She earned 2nd Place Reporter of the Year in Class A by Louisiana AP the same year. Fatzer-Shackelford had been named Louisiana AP’s Reporter of the Year in 2004. In 2011, she received Women in Media’s Broadcast Award of Excellence.

She has covered major news stories in her broadcast career, such as the Lafayette Grand 16 Theater shooting in 2015, the disappearance and murder investigation of UL Lafayette student Mickey Shunick in 2012; and Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Issac.

Before joining WAFB-TV in 2006, Fatzer-Shackelford reported for KLFY-TV in Lafayette and wrote for *The Independent and Lifestyle Lafayette*.

She holds a bachelor’s degree in mass communication from Southeastern Louisiana University and a master’s degree in mass communication from UL Lafayette.

— Mary Cormaci



WAFB-TV’s Cheryl Mercedes

SUBMITTED PHOTO

and Acadiana Arts Council. He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Dianne Bourgeois DesOrmeaux, '59; one daughter, Caprice DesOrmeaux Hewitt; and three grandchildren. He was preceded in death by a son, **DAVID COLLIN DESORMEAUX, '05**.

**LARDY GRABINSKI MEAUX, '75**, died Oct. 19, 2015, at the age of 89. She held a bachelor's degree in education and was a teacher in Abbeville, La., for many years. She was an active member of St. Theresa Catholic Church. Meaux is survived by nine children, Juanita Hargrave, Jennifer Milligan, John Meaux, **JOYCE DESORMEAUX, '91, '03**, Jerome Meaux, June Bergeron, Judith DeHart, Jeffery Meaux, and Jessica Broussard; 21 grandchildren; 40 great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Didier Meaux, and a daughter, Joann.

**RAYMOND JOSEPH GOODRICH, '83**, co-owner of Lafayette Music Co., died April 15, 2016, at age 69. He was a member or leader of many civic and service organizations, such as Pinhook Rotary Club, Holy Cross Catholic Church Pastoral Council, and the Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. Under his leadership, Lafayette Music Co. created endowed scholarships for over 150 music students. He played lead trumpet in several bands in his career. Goodrich is survived by his wife of 51 years, **KAREN BOREL GOODRICH, '07**; sons, **RAYMOND J. GOODRICH II, '90**, and Blaine Matthew Goodrich; a daughter, **PAMELA GOODRICH JOHNSON, '86**; six grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

**ALLAN MICHAEL STEWART, '88**, died Aug. 25, 2015. He held bachelor's degrees in mathematics and computer science. He was a member of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. Stewart is survived by his parents; Louise and James

Stewart; a brother, James H. Stewart Jr.; and two sisters, Jenny Stewart Steinberg and Cynthia Stewart Bock. Stewart was a resident of Bonita Springs, Fla.

**ANNE EDNA DUNNE PERKINS, '94**, died Nov. 12, 2015. She was 75. Perkins held a bachelor's degree in elementary education. She taught for several years in elementary schools in and around Lafayette. Perkins also worked for Volunteers of America, assisting displaced families after Hurricane Katrina. She was a member of Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist. Survivors include her children, **THOMAS PERKINS JR., '89, '94**, **ANDREA PERKINS ABBOT, '89**, and **KATHLEEN PERKINS, '92**, and three grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Thomas Perkins Sr.

**GREG FULTON, '98**, died Feb. 14, 2016, in Waxahachie, Texas. He was 51. Fulton served in the U.S. Air Force for eight years and taught for 17 years; he taught for 16 of those years at the Palmer Independent School District. He is survived by his parents, Gene and Glenda Fulton; daughters, Jamie Fulton and Rebecca Fulton Cowser; and three grandchildren.

**SISTER CLAIRE ANNE METREJEAN, '10**, a postulant, died April 9, 2016, at the Missionaries of Charity Convent in Mexico City. She was 28. The Missionaries of Charity is a religious order established by Saint Teresa of Calcutta in 1950. It works with the poorest of the poor around the world. Metrejean earned a bachelor's degree with honors in nursing and began her nursing career at Heart Hospital of Lafayette in May 2010. In January 2015, she entered the Missionaries of Charity Convent in Chicago as a pre-aspirant. On New Year's Day, 2016, she flew to the Missionaries of Charity Convent in Mexico City to begin postulancy. Metrejean is survived by her parents, **TODD METREJEAN, '82**, and **MARGARET**

**FREY METREJEAN, '82**, and her brothers, the **REV. ANDRE METREJEAN, '07**, and Thomas Metrejean.

**BURTON RAFFEL**, an esteemed literary scholar and translator, died Sept. 29, 2015, at age 87. He was a distinguished professor of arts and humanities at UL Lafayette from 1989 until his retirement in 2003. Raffel was best known for his translation of Beowulf, one of the most widely used translations in the country. His translation of François Rabelais' "Gargantua and Pantagruel" earned the 1991 French-American Foundation Translation Award. A poet and writer, he published more than 100 books. Raffel was the first full professor at Haifa University in Israel. He then taught at the University of Texas Austin, York University in Toronto and the University of Denver. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, and his children, Brian, Kezia, Shifra, Nathan and **WENDY RAFFEL, '02**. He was preceded in death by one of his children, Blake Raffel.

**WILLIAM RIECK**, a professor of curriculum and instruction for 25 years at UL Lafayette, died Nov. 26, 2015, at the age of 73. Rieck received the UL Lafayette Foundation's Distinguished Professor Award in 2009. Prior to joining the UL Lafayette faculty, he was a high school principal for several years. He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Judith Anne Rieck; a daughter, Melissa Anne Rieck; a son, **WILLIAM A. RIECK JR., '01**; and a granddaughter.

**ROBERT "BOB" SIDMAN** died Aug. 20, 2016. He was 76. Sidman became a professor of mathematics at UL Lafayette in 1974. He wrote nearly 40 publications in his research specialization, mathematical applications to medical science. Sidman treasured local theater and performed in dramatic and comedic roles for over 40 years. He was also a volunteer

with Hospice of Acadiana and the VITA adult literacy program in Lafayette. Sidman is survived by his wife, Patricia Drury Sidman, and daughter, Karin Sidman Croghan.

**DR. IAN BRUCE TURNER** died Aug. 9, 2016, at age 70. A history professor and head of



Edith Garland Dupré Library's Archives and Special Collections, he had worked at the University for 33 years. He was an active member and leader of many professional organizations. Turner was also a member of Chorale Acadienne, the Acadiana Symphony Chorus, and the First Presbyterian Church choir. He played cello with the Acadiana Symphony, UL Lafayette Symphony Orchestra and Lafayette Community Strings. Turner was an ordained Presbyterian elder, president of Wesley Campus Ministry and a volunteer for Communities United in Prayer, Service Basket Ministry and Meals on Wheels. He is survived by his wife, Sue Ann Steck Turner, and daughters, Kristen Marie Turner, Jessica Lynn Turner and Kathryn Elise Turner.



**1898-1921**  
Southwestern Louisiana  
Industrial Institute

**1921-1960**  
Southwestern Louisiana  
Institute

**1960-1999**  
University of Southwestern  
Louisiana

**1999-PRESENT**  
University of Louisiana  
at Lafayette



## Eminent Educators

Annual awards grow to include dedication to service learning

**T**he annual Eminent Faculty Awards have a new addition: a Leadership in Service Award.

Geoff Gjertson, a professor of architecture, is the first recipient of the honor, which recognizes a faculty member who is committed to combining service learning with classroom instruction.

The other Eminent Faculty Awards are the Distinguished Professor Award and the Ray P. Authement Excellence in Teaching Award. A committee composed of faculty members from each academic area and led by the director of the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development, selects the most deserving candidates each year.

The UL Lafayette Foundation presents the awards, based on the committee's recommendations. Each award carries a \$5,000 stipend.

Dr. Emad Habib, a professor of civil engineering, and Dr. John Tetnowski, a professor of communicative disorders, were named this year's Distinguished Professor Award recipients. Established in 1965, the award recognizes University educators for their research, teaching effectiveness, and contributions to their professions and campus life.

Shelly Leroy, a senior instructor of English, and Dr.

Patricia Mire, a master instructor of biology, received the Dr. Ray P. Authement Excellence in Teaching Award. The award is presented for faculty members' commitment to teaching, innovation, and pedagogical scholarship. It was established in 1992 and renamed in 2008 to honor Authement, the University's fifth president.

The Foundation is working with a design firm to create a display that will feature the names of all Eminent Faculty Award winners since the inception of the recognition program. It will be installed in the center corridor of the first floor of UL Lafayette's Edith Garland Dupré Library.

"We want to draw attention year 'round to the exceptional faculty members who have received these awards," said Dr. Julie Falgout, executive director and CEO of the UL Lafayette Foundation. "We host a banquet each spring to honor them but we wanted a permanent display in a high-traffic area on campus. The library is the symbolic heart of a university campus, so it seemed like the most appropriate place."

The Foundation also has posted videos on its website, [ullafayetefoundation.org/efa](http://ullafayetefoundation.org/efa), that feature this year's Eminent Faculty Award recipients.



## Dr. Emad Habib

**D**r. Emad Habib watches the weather. Or, to be clear, the rain.

A professor of civil engineering, he doesn't scan the clouds to decide if he should carry an umbrella. His interest centers on rainfall measurement and estimation, and hydrology, the branch of science related to the study the earth's water, its properties, and movement patterns.

Water, after all, “shapes the lives of humans,” he reasoned, “whether it’s the water we drink, the water we use for crops or the water that comes with a hurricane or a storm surge.

“If you can understand rainfall, you can figure out what’s going to happen with water on land. Rainfall is highly unpredictable. It’s why we can’t give enough advanced warning for floods, or always reliably predict drought.”

Habib has published 53 journal articles and five book chapters. He received the Best Journal Award from the American Society of Civil Engineers. He also earned the society’s Watershed Excellence Award.

During his 12 years at the University, he has generated \$4 million in external research funding, including \$2 million from the National Science Foundation.

“Dr. Habib is committed to producing high-quality research and his work has been recognized by peers at the national and state levels, as illustrated by the competitive awards and grants he has received,” noted Dr. Kenneth McManis, head of the Department of Civil Engineering.

Habib led a team of scientists that evaluated satellite data collected over the Nile Basin in Africa. It developed an algorithm that helps manage and predict the flow of the Nile River.

He is working on an NSF grant to identify strategies for building sustainable water systems in Louisiana and the southeastern United States.

Habib also led a multi-institutional effort to develop “HydroViz,” a web-based platform that promotes education in hydrology, water, resources, and coastal ecosystems. The system enables students to access hydrologic information and weather models based on research conducted in coastal Louisiana, the Rocky Mountains, Utah and the Florida Everglades.

“The idea is to expose students to different ecosystems and to hydrologic environments. HydroViz was developed based on research, but at the end of the day, I’m a teacher, so I like that my research benefits students,” Habib said.

**‘...at the end of the day, I’m a teacher, so I like that my research benefits students.’**



## Dr. John A. Tetnowski

When Dr. John A. Tetnowski, a professor of communicative disorders, interacts with a person who stutters, he sees someone who struggles with more than articulating words and phrases.

He sees someone who avoids social interaction or who has chosen a profession that requires as little speaking as possible.

“Stuttering affects so much more than speech. It creates avoidance of situations, esteem issues, feelings of being less qualified,” Tetnowski explained.

He once treated a child whose father had stuttered as a boy. The man told Tetnowski that he purposely

relinquished his place at the top of his high school class, by performing just poorly enough academically to ensure he would slip to third-best student. “The reason was that the top two students at the man’s school were required to give speeches at graduation, and he knew he would stutter.”

Tetnowski, the Ben Blanco/BORSF Endowed Professor in Communicative Disorders, and graduate coordinator for the doctoral program in Applied Language and Speech Pathology, has made a career of helping people overcome stuttering.

**‘...I saw the impact it could have on people’s lives, where I could help people to be successful and change their lives.’**

“John has established himself among the top echelon of researchers and scholars in fluency disorder. He is also recognized as a talented clinician,” said Dr. Nancye Roussel, head of the Department of Communicative Disorders.

Tetnowski has published 65 manuscripts and edited one book. He has also taught and mentored hundreds of students during his 17 years at the University, including 12 doctoral students.

A board-certified “stuttering specialist,” Tetnowski has mentored one of the only three other specialists

in Louisiana. There are only 155 stuttering specialists in the United States. He is a board member of

the National Stuttering Association, and founder of its Lafayette chapter. He is a fellow of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

Tetnowski, whose initial major was pre-med, said that a communicative disorders class “completely changed what I wanted to do. I said, ‘That’s for me.’ What really drew me to it, as much as anything, is I saw the impact it could have on people’s lives, where I could help people to be successful and change their lives. That was exciting for me.”





## Shelly Leroy

An avid reader while growing up, Shelly Leroy, a senior instructor of English, spent her summers indoors, her nose buried in a book.

That love of words and storytelling led to a stint as editor of her high school newspaper. She enrolled at LSU, majoring in journalism, but “didn’t like the deadlines, and I wanted to write fiction, so I tried creative writing.”

Although she earned a bachelor’s degree in English, with a concentration in creative writing, that wasn’t a perfect fit, either.

“I wasn’t a great poet,” she said with a laugh, “and I also realized I can’t make any money at this.”

Instead, she found her niche in professional writing, which includes technical writing, business writing and copywriting. She earned a master’s degree in English from Bowling Green State University, with a concentration in scientific and technical communication.

“I thought, ‘Aha, this is a lot more my speed.’ You’re not writing for your own benefit. You’re not writing poetry that no one will ever read. You’re writing things that people can use – a set of instructions or a pamphlet or a medical report,” she said.

Leroy, who joined the University in 2004, teaches professional writing courses for English majors and majors from other colleges. For about three years, Leroy has taught students solely online.

She was a member of a team from the department who developed a Graduate Certificate in Professional Writing program. Students receive instruction in a range of subjects, including writing, editing, document design and publishing.

Professional writing undergraduates and graduate students are required to complete internships. Graduates of the program have landed jobs in a range of industries, from oil and gas to marine geophysics and seafloor mapping.

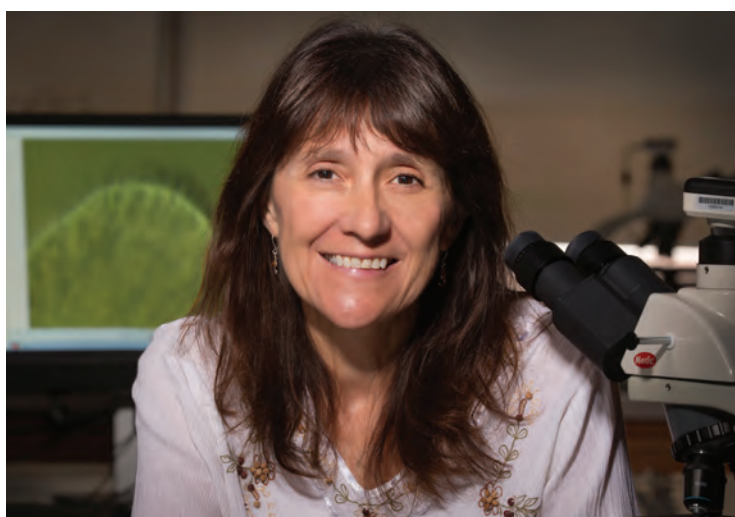
Leroy is focused on recruiting and retention, and developing partners in business and industry.

“Shelly Leroy is one of the English department’s most talented, caring, committed, and valued teachers,” said Dr. Jordan Kellman, dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

Many who enroll in her courses agree.

“My feedback from students about the technical writing course that I teach is that this is the most useful class they have taken at UL. They can see how it’s going to relate to their careers,” Leroy said.

**‘My feedback from students about the technical writing course that I teach is that this is the most useful class they have taken at UL.’**



## Dr. Patricia Mire

Dr. Patricia Mire, a master instructor of biology, brings innovation to the classroom, to her research, and even to efforts that expose high school students to the wonders of science.

For example, she has coordinated science-based talent shows for students enrolled in her large classes of about 200 students.

“I’ve had students who write blues songs and play guitar, do puppet shows, do visual art, sculpture, write poems. It’s amazing what they come up with, and really hilarious and fun, in many cases. The true benefit is that they learn about science,” she said.

# Geoff Gjertson

Although Geoff Gjertson is the first recipient of the Leadership in Service Award, he believes the honor belongs to thousands of students, faculty, and staff members who have made service learning an integral part of the University.

"The award acknowledges all the people, past or present, who have contributed thousands of hours of time to campus and the community. Students and faculty put in more than 180,000 hours of service every year, which is just astounding," he said.

For his part, Gjertson has helped students form coalitions of public, private, industry, and University partners to design and build community buildings.

"Under his mentorship, students gain experience working with the community and getting real-world experience in designing and building projects," said Tom Sammons, director of the School of Architecture and Design.

Gjertson is leading a group of students in the design and construction of a "tiny house." The small houses, a trend in many parts of the nation, are typically about 100 to 500 square feet. They attract people who want to downsize and live in affordable, efficient and often mobile spaces.

"I think it's a great idea for many demographics. It's primarily seen as an option for retiring couples who want a smaller space to live in or young couples just getting started. We're looking at it as potential affordable housing for the homeless," Gjertson said.

More than a dozen graduate and undergraduate students



**'They love helping people, and gaining hands-on experience.'**

majoring in architecture, interior design and industrial design are working on the project. The hope is to build a tiny house this summer.

Another project, the Camellia Boulevard Gridshell Pavilion, was completed about a year ago. The open-air structure was designed and constructed by students, who consulted with contractors, engineers and students from other universities, including Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia.

The dome-shaped pavilion consists of a skeleton of crisscrossed oak slats topped with aluminum panels. The "grid" of wood is attached to short concrete walls that border a concrete floor. The pavilion stands on green space near Mount Vernon Drive, the first feature at an art park.

"There's never any struggle to get students who want to participate in these projects," Gjertson said. "They love helping people, and gaining hands-on experience."

Dr. Paul Leberg, head of the Department of Biology, praised Mire's creative pedagogical approaches. "Typically, it is hard to be innovative in large sections with hundreds of students, but this has not stopped her from experimenting with novel ways to explain complex topics," he noted.

Mire founded the Department of Biology's Undergraduate Research Symposium.

She was also instrumental in the development of the University's Science Day. Hundreds of high school students tour University science departments and labs, and view experiments and demonstrations as

part of the yearly event. "We actually show the students what goes on in our labs and let them experience what it's like being a college student. It's important to get kids excited about science. That's when I got excited about science," she said.

During her 20 years at the University, Mire has helped generate over \$600,000 in grants from the National Science Foundation and from the National Institutes of Health.

A key research interest is sea anemones, stinging creatures that cling to rocks or coral reefs and zap fish with venom.

She describes anemones as "the simplest

animals to have a central nervous system."

"It's intriguing to study what the minimum requirements for a nervous system are and that allow the animal to survive perfectly well," she noted.

Her research focus is on hair cells, which are similar to the ones in the inner ears of humans. Those cells enable anemones to detect vibrations from prey and regulate firing of stinging cells that help the animals capture prey.

"We're trying to investigate the molecules in anemones that are involved in causing or initiating development of the hair cells and development of the stinging cells," she explained.

**'It's important to get kids excited about science.'**





**Can you spot the impostor?** It's hiding in plain sight in this photo of Cypress Lake on campus. Photographer Doug Dugas' keen eye enabled him to catch the impersonator in the act. Here's a hint: one of the Cypress knees is hungry and has lots of teeth. Spoiler alert: Look in the bottom, right-hand corner of the photo. A motionless alligator's wide, rounded snout is positioned vertically, above the water, while its body remains mostly submerged. The 'gator is poised to take advantage of any unsuspecting bird that wanders by.

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